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CHILD HEALTH AND
CHARACTER

CHILD HEALTH AND CHARACTER

BY

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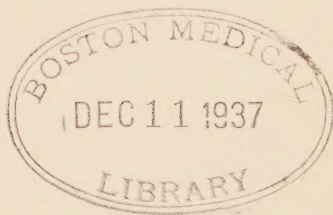
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AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

DURING the last twenty years women have been very anxious to learn all they can about health. They have studied hygiene and dietetics, in the hope of providing their children with an environment which will ensure that they will grow up with sound teeth, well-developed muscles, and healthy digestions. Now a new phase is beginning. Psychology is making a very real appeal to women. As parents, teachers, and physicians, we are realizing that just as a knowledge of hygiene is the basis of health, so also in the study and application of psychology lies the great hope of increasing human happiness. Many people are unhappy and lazy and inefficient who ought to be full of purpose and contentment : women must study the prevention of unhappiness if

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the new generation is to progress towards the real civilization.

Evolution is based upon more knowledge of the *psyche* or mind of human beings and upon common-sense methods of developing character from the earliest years of life. Every child inherits primitive instincts from his remote ancestors through thousands of generations. With these instincts are linked powerful emotions which can make life beautiful or tragic in its misery : with the instinct of pugnacity, for example, so useful in preservation, there is associated the emotion of anger ; with the instinct of flight, fear ; with curiosity, wonder ; with self-display, elation ; with parental instinct, tenderness. The sex instinct is very powerful because it is concerned with the preservation of the race. These primitive instincts are neither good nor bad in themselves ; they are " natural ". Rightly used they make for happiness ; uncontrolled and perverted they are ugly and the cause of intense misery. Character depends to a large extent on their control and sublimation.

The development of personality is very rapid in the nursery phase. " The self " emerges,

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that same self that is composed of (1) our primitive instincts with their attached emotions, (2) sentiments, of love and hate, for example, (3) disposition, cruel, kind, mean, generous, (4) habits, good and bad, (5) complexes due to repression in early years, (6) temperament which depends upon the physiology of the body (if the digestion is good, the blood pure, and the internal secretory glands healthy, a person is more optimistic, more contented), (7) character, which develops through good environment and wise discipline in the early years of life.

Fathers as well as mothers are becoming interested in child psychology, the study of behaviour. Twenty years ago the father of a family was a somewhat different figure in the household (from the child's point of view) from what he is today. He is more of a playmate and equal, and less of a tyrant than he was in the old days when "I'll tell your father" was a frequent threat to small delinquents. Modern mothers know that it is not fair to make the other parent a boggy man, and it is doubtful if today young persons would experience the thrill of fear such a statement was expected to

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provoke in our nursery days. We realize now that the child is like primitive man, suggestible, imitative, with less control of the emotions than the adult who is, or ought to be, less suggestible, more rational.

During the early years of life, the nursery phase, the child is naturally selfish. His greed and selfishness and indifference to truth are perfectly normal. He is a little savage, curious, pugnacious, full of impulses and desires which we must help him to direct into the right channels. He loves his mother or his mother substitute, and he loves, of course, himself. His mother ministers to his well-being and he loves her for her kindly protective presence and for the stream of love in which she envelops him. About three years of age self-consciousness develops ; a child becomes aware of his ego, and obtains a picture of himself derived from the attitude of the people in his environment. Two serious errors can be made by those in charge of children at this stage of life, —over-sentimentality and “spoiling”, the effect of which is that the child carries through life a phantasy of himself as wonderful, perfect, clever, and beautiful. On the other hand, if a

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child is too harshly treated and there are constant fault-finding, bullying and lack of love, the character is warped from the beginning by a sense of inferiority. As a reaction against nagging in the nursery, a child may become over-aggressive, constantly in conflict with authority, a trouble to everybody, a misery to his poor little self. We must admit that some children are more attractive, more lovable than others, but we must be fair. Temperament is largely a matter of physiology and biochemistry. The alert, vital child may be richer in thyroid secretion than the more "stupid" morose brother or sister.

Badly fed children who are given an excess of starchy food (potatoes, rice, tapioca, bread, cake, and biscuits) are apt to be "temperamental" because their brains are irritated by toxins or poisons absorbed from the intestinal canal. Simple food, with a liberal allowance of fruit and green vegetables and three simple meals a day, and no "snacks" (such as milk at eleven and biscuits in bed), helps to prevent nerve storms and conflicts in the nursery the memory of which influence the character of the child in the wrong way.

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I have said that we must direct impulses into right channels, and this is particularly true of the impulse to help. Little children want to do the work in which grown-ups are engaged. They want to help mother feed the chickens and nurse wash up the tea-things. They like to make the beds and help with baby's bath. Unfortunately the mother and nurse often receive such offers of help in the wrong way. A child's "help", we know, is mostly a hindrance—we can do things so much more quickly and efficiently ourselves—, and so we check instead of welcoming this first impulse of helpfulness. The result is a very definite distaste of helping a few years later when the children are past the chummy age and when their help in the house and garden would be very useful to us. We must watch for good impulses and encourage instead of inhibiting the impulse to help, to share with others, to give love and service. We must observe children very carefully without intruding upon their privacy. Some children very early develop the sense of display which is quite normal at the nursery phase and which should be allowed expression. A child is interested

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in his own body and admires himself. If we object and sneer at what we call conceit or, worse still, if we infer that there is something shameful about the human body, we produce inhibitions and complexes which are very harmful in their effect upon character and personality. Without over-praise or undue criticism we permit children to "show off", and so help them through another stage of psychological development. It is normal "to show off" at five or six or seven years, although it is absurd at forty.

Curiosity is an instinct which displays itself in the nursery stage. Children are curious about everything, very curious about sex in the sense that they want to know where the kittens and the lambs and the babies come from. Character is affected by our methods of dealing with this very natural curiosity. My own feeling is that we should answer the child's questions simply, sincerely, truthfully. It is not very difficult. After all, every child knows that the bird is hatched from an egg, and, if we explain that all life begins as an egg, and that in the highest animals—mammals—the eggshell is soft and breaks at birth, the

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child will find no difficulty in accepting our explanation. A child's attitude to sex is very simple. His natural instinct of curiosity is associated emotionally with "wonder", and if we satisfy curiosity the child also is satisfied. If, on the other hand, we suggest that a child is wrong, "wicked", to ask for information on this subject, a sex complex is developed. The child regards sex as something interesting yet shameful and disgraceful. So he pushes the subject from consciousness with the result that a sex complex is formed and his attitude towards sex will always be rather abnormal. He may of course have a very strong instinct of curiosity and may persist with his questions until some one gives the information he desires. Unfortunately, he may receive such information from the wrong type of person. The mother is the right person, in the interests of character-building, to impart sex knowledge to the child. Curiosity is not a sign of sinfulness. It is the basis of scientific research; it makes for human progress unless wrongly directed, for example in the display of curiosity about our neighbours' very private affairs and about subjects that ought not to concern us.

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In our effort to help character-development we must encourage good habits in the nursery, the habits of punctuality, of tidiness, of truthfulness, of personal cleanliness.

We must do all we can to help children to form the right sort of sentiments. A sentiment is a psychological constellation formed by the association of the primitive instincts and their attached emotions with an idea or person. Love of parent or love of country or of school are examples of good sentiments. Hatred of neighbours or of other races or of people who think differently from ourselves about religion or politics are examples of bad sentiments. We must try to make children loving and lovable without being stupidly sentimental. We must develop sociability, which is based on the herd instinct, and try to give the children in our charge a big perspective.

This little book has been written to help mothers to understand some of the health problems and psychological problems of children from infancy to adolescence. First, we must study the infant who is in truth the father of the man, at least psychologically.

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In our interest in psychology, we must not forget the importance of the physical, which influences the mind more than many parents realize. Thus we shall consider, in addition to psychology, hygiene and the more common illnesses likely to appear during the nursery and school-room stages of life.

Some parts of this book have appeared in articles that I have contributed to the Press. More especially I wish to thank the Editors of the *Glasgow Herald*, *The Ladies' Home World*, and *The Nursery World* for their courtesy in allowing me to include in some of the chapters material which has already been published in these periodicals.

CHAPTER I

INFANCY

THE first year of life is the most important from the point of view of health to every human being. The baby has a better chance nowadays, when women are more and more concerning themselves with child welfare and seeking education in the care and upbringing of the child. Most women realize that the child has a right to the care of his own mother, but the mother's ignorance is still responsible for a good deal of ill-health amongst children.

We must remember that a human being is alive for nine months before birth. The child's health is partly dependent upon antenatal factors, and for that reason the expectant mother should study her health in a sensible way. There is no reason why she should lead the life of a semi-invalid, for activity of mind and body is good for mother and child. Regular

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exercise is essential, and should be equivalent to about three miles of walking a day.

Diet is most important. The mother should eat plenty of green vegetables and drink milk. She should take meat in very small quantities and none at all during the last month. Diet rich in vitamins will make a great deal of difference to the quality of teeth and bones in the future child ; therefore brown bread, milk, butter, and fruits and salad should form the basis of the diet. It is the duty of the expectant mother to keep her mind occupied with pleasant things, and maintain to the best of her ability a quiet and happy outlook on life. Every expectant mother should see a doctor several times before the baby is born, especially in the case of the first baby.

Fresh air, rest, and regular sleep are important matters. Every attempt should be made to lead as natural a life as possible. Light house-work and light gardening are excellent ; the busy professional woman need not give up her work until the later months, unless it is exhausting. Over-fatigue will make the expectant mother more emotional, more liable to be worried and to notice discomforts ; a rest in

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the middle of the day and before the evening meal helps to prevent fatigue. It is best to avoid medicines, although a tablespoonful of olive oil, once or twice daily, served with salad, is often necessary. The teeth require attention, and bad teeth should be extracted before the baby is born. Septic teeth affect the milk, and so jeopardize baby's health during the nursing period. If possible, the mother's teeth should be X-rayed, as this is the only certain way of finding out if the roots are sound.

The normal baby at birth weighs about $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 8 pounds. He should gain 1 pound in the first month ; at three months he should weigh $12\frac{1}{2}$ pounds ; and at six months he should be double his weight at birth. At the end of the first year he should weigh 21 pounds, that is, three times his weight at birth.

Perhaps the most important matter connected with the child is his food. For the first two days he requires very little food ; once in six hours may be sufficient. One of the greatest mistakes is to imagine that the mother's milk is not sufficient and to resort to artificial feeding. After all, the infant stomach is only one ounce in capacity, that is about the size of an

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egg-cup, and if the baby is artificially fed, and in the slightest degree overfed, he will have no incentive to suck vigorously, which is the best of all means of bringing milk to the breast. More than 95 per cent. of women can nurse their babies ; and when we remember that the death-rate of bottle-fed babies is fifteen times as great as of those who are fed in the natural way, we shall realize the importance of this subject to human life and health.

A baby should be fed every three hours for the first three months, that is, at six, nine, twelve a.m., and three, six, and ten p.m. Night feedings should never be given ; one of the best lessons a child can learn is regularity, and that he is fed, not when he wishes, but according to a set time. After three months the baby is fed every four hours. If a child is content, if he sleeps well, and gains 4 to 5 ounces a week, the mother's milk suits him perfectly. He should have one breast at each feed, as there is then no danger of over-feeding. If the mother's milk is not sufficient, it can be supplemented by giving equal parts of pasteurized cow's milk and water, or one of the dried milks. The scientific method is to weigh the baby

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before and after the feed, so that exact knowledge of the quantity taken is obtained. During the first week the baby receives 1 ounce at each meal; he should be given 2 ounces at one month of age, 3 ounces at two months, 4 ounces at three months, until at four months he is having $4\frac{1}{2}$ ounces, and at five and six months, 5 and 6 ounces respectively. From seven to nine months, 7 to 9 ounces is the usual amount, although the quantity varies always according to the weight and general condition of the child.

The hygiene of the nursery during the first year includes attention to baby's bath, the temperature of which must be estimated by a thermometer, never by the hand. The water should be about 100°F. ; but as the baby grows older, the bath should be gradually reduced in warmth to 80°F. , which should be the temperature for a child of about five months. Careful drying will help to prevent scalding; the best dusting-powder consists of equal parts of starch, zinc oxide, and boracic acid powder.

The modern baby is clothed very loosely and lightly; a knitted binder, a woollen vest, one

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flannel of moderate length, a napkin, and a loose dress which can be slipped over the feet or fastened in front, are all that is necessary.

So much trouble is caused by digestive ills during the first year that something must be said about diarrhoea and constipation.

When baby is bottle-fed, it is most important to ensure absolute cleanliness of the bottles. These should be of a boat shape, with a teat at one end and a valve at the other. After a feed, the bottles should be washed in cold water, then in hot water ; and they must be kept, when not in use, in an enamel bowl full of water. Once daily they must be boiled in a saucepan kept for this purpose. They should be placed in cold water which is brought to the boil ; and after boiling for five minutes, the water must cool before the bottles are removed, in order to avoid cracking. The valves and teats should only be placed in the boiling water for two minutes. The food should be made up in bulk, morning and afternoon, and kept in a covered milk-jug which has been scalded. But if dried milk is used, the meal should be freshly prepared each time. The doctor should write down the strength and quantity of milk or dried

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milk to be used ; and during the first year he should see the baby once a month and give all the necessary directions ; this practice would help to improve the health of thousands of babies.

Summer diarrhœa or infant cholera is spread by flies, which carry germs into the milk, so that it is most important to keep babies' milk cool and covered. At the beginning of an attack of diarrhœa a dose of castor oil should be given, and all food stopped for twenty-four hours. Babies should be given nothing but warm water which has been boiled, or egg albumen. This is prepared by stirring the white of the raw fresh egg in a teacup of cold water ; a teaspoonful of sugar is added, and the mixture strained through muslin. The clear fluid which comes through the muslin should be given to the baby in the same quantity as his usual feeds. Constipation is sometimes caused by under-feeding or by deficiency of fat, so that it may be necessary to add a little cream to baby's milk. Constipation is less likely to occur if the baby is nursed by the mother ; when it does occur, the mother should be given more cream and butter in her diet.

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Another point is that baby ought to have water between his meals ; a teaspoonful or dessert-spoonful of boiled water may be given several times daily.

Teething ought not to be attended by any unpleasant symptoms, as it is a natural physiological process. At about six months the first teeth appear ; these are the incisors or front-cutting teeth. The central incisors are cut at about nine months, and the lateral incisors at about ten months. The first molars appear when baby is about one year old ; the “ eye ” teeth, when he is eighteen months ; and the number of the remaining molars should be complete when baby is about two and a half years. Teething is usually associated with dribbling, and the gums may be a little hot and tender. A baby should never be given a dummy teat or “ comforter ” : it introduces germs into the mouth, interferes with the development of the teeth, and predisposes to digestive disorders and “ colds ”, from the excessive saliva which the constant sucking encourages.

At about nine months, when baby has cut some teeth, weaning must take place. This

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should be a gradual process, beginning on the morning of his nine-months birthday. He should have one solid meal a day, such as ground rice and milk with custard, or crumbs and yolk of egg. During the second week of weaning he should have two meals a day, supplemented by breast or bottle ; and at ten months he should be weaned. He now, like a grown-up person, has three meals a day : breakfast at eight, dinner at half-past twelve, and tea-supper at five o'clock.

Suitable foods for a child at this age are :—Milk puddings, junket and cream, lightly cooked eggs, vegetables and gravy soups, bread-crumbs and gravy, a little cauliflower, spinach, etc., floury potatoes, bacon fat, and crusts, well-boiled porridge and milk, rusks and milk, certain stewed fruits, such as apples and prunes.

Baby's nerves ought to give no trouble in the well-managed nursery. The morning and afternoon sleep should be kept up during the first year. Quietness, methodical ways, and careful dieting are important points in providing a child with the right environment for the development of the brain and nervous system. Excitement and loud noises are the worst

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possible things for the young child. The nursery should be the quietest, airiest, and best room in the house.

Psychological development must be considered. With regard to the special senses, the cornea, the surface of the eye, is slightly sensitive at birth. Infants avoid strong lights for the first few weeks, although they will be seen to notice light as early as the sixth and seventh day. The eyes begin to move coordinately during the third month, and objects are recognized at about five months old. A baby is deaf for the first twenty-four hours ; but the hearing is acute at the second or third month, and the infant will recognize familiar voices at the third or fourth month. Taste is highly developed at birth ; and whilst touch is well developed with regard to the lips and tongue at birth, because of the necessity of sucking, the rest of the body does not begin to show much sensitiveness until after ten or twelve weeks. Smell develops late, compared with other senses, but some observers believe that an infant smells the milk of the mother's breast from the beginning.

Baby ought to have a high degree of muscular

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fitness : he should be able to hold up his head at three or four months, sit up at six or seven months, and stand upright on his feet when he is nine or ten months old. Many babies walk before the first year is out. A baby should be able to get about on his feet at thirteen or fourteen months ; late walking and late teething suggest rickets. A normal baby's speech develops quite early in life ; girls speak two or three months earlier than boys. The first experiments are made with names of persons and things, later with adjectives and verbs, and later still, after the beginning of the second year, baby makes sentences. He knows his mother or mother-substitute quite early ; at six months he recognizes his father and even loves him, if he does his share of child-rearing. Before we have perfect babies, we must have more mothers and fathers who will study child welfare, diet, and child-psychology.

There was never a time when young women were more willing to learn than now, so that we have every hope of more and more ideal babies, perfect in health, in looks, in habits, and in development.

There is psychological development from the

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first day of life. The child is born with the sense of omnipotence. He is omnipotent in that he is ministered to and cared for entirely, whilst giving nothing to the world. He is egocentric, self-centred, completely selfish. He has to go through what Ferenczi calls "a cycle of development towards reality"; he has to adjust himself to life and grow away from the completely egocentric phase. He takes the first step during his first year of life, when he transfers some of his love from himself to his mother. He retains his sense of omnipotence, because through the language of gesture and of speech he has his wants attended to by an admiring circle of adults. Baby can be spoilt very easily during his first year; but the best mother realizes that he must be helped to grow in character by forming good habits and by realizing that he cannot always get his own way.

Baby has instinctive reactions, that is, he cries when hurt or hungry, kicks when pricked, and swallows when food is placed within his lips. By repetition of external stimuli, habit is formed: and habit is the basis of character, good or bad. Mothers who feed the baby whenever he cries, who pick him up and fondle

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him whenever he wants to be petted, are sowing seeds of self-indulgence which may bring bitter sorrow twenty years after. The baby, like all young animals, should have love and constant attention from the mother, who should at the same time realize that every action repeated and made habitual makes for favourable or unfavourable character. Study expression, "reactions", behaviour; watch the imitative faculty after it develops in the baby.

There is in every one of us the instinct to experiment. The baby of ten months building bricks, the younger infant crawling and trying to get on his legs, are experimenting with the same instinct which is aroused when the engineer or the electrician experiments with his apparatus.

The young animal pursues lines of conduct which are not only for the benefit of himself but for the welfare and progress of the race. Watch the baby imitate his father, who has a peculiar sneeze or wheeze; watch the toddler limping when her elder sister has sprained her ankle!

A serious thought this, that a child learns far less from the verbal teaching and sermonizing we inflict upon him than by copying his

parents, his elders, in word and deed. Every child is a chameleon psychologically. That is, he takes the tone and colour of his environment. The lesson to us is, eliminate quarrelling from the home. Let us instil the good habits of cheerfulness, punctuality, tidiness, kindness, and sociability by practising these ourselves, so that our children may grow up to be the sort of men and women we should like to be ourselves.

“ Suggestion ” is a terrible force—an extraordinary power for good or evil where children are concerned. Suggestion through the mother is a power that is almost uncanny in the first six years of life. The indulgent, weak mother encourages the child to be disobedient, fretful, selfish. Once a child discovers he can have his own way by making himself disagreeable, the parents have an avalanche of trouble before them. Good habits of thought and conduct must be encouraged by the mother constantly, not by direct suggestion, which produces what the psychologist calls “ negativism ”, but by example, by indirect suggestion, encouragement of “ happy ” conduct, discouragement of selfishness and self-indulgence.

CHAPTER II

THE TODDLER

THOSE who love children are beginning to think that, while the attention of parents and doctors has been for twenty years directed towards the baby, the child of two or three years has been somewhat neglected. There has been an immense saving of infant life and improvement of health as a result of the care and consideration babies have received, and now the toddlers are coming into their own.

The principles of diet and hygiene are the same through all the nursery phases. The little child of two years must be supplied with three simple meals a day, with plenty of "natural" foods, milk, eggs, butter, vegetables, and fruit. The chapter on dietetics will give all necessary information about feeding the toddler. Dress should be light and loose, and

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consist of as few garments as possible. I suggest that "combinations" are better than two separate garments, in two thicknesses, one for winter, and a thinner for summer: a second garment, consisting of vest and knickers buttoned together, and a jersey. Most mothers will like to add a skirt in the case of small girls. The toddler should have a rest and short sleep in the middle of the day, and he should not be allowed to be on his feet all the time; it can usually be arranged that he is given a ride during the daily walk.

The psychology of the toddler is very important. Jealousy and fear are frequently evinced between the ages of one and four, and such problems ought to be studied by the parents.

Why does the toddler suddenly become difficult to manage, quick-tempered or sulky, or refuse to take his food properly at times? At three years of age most children have, or should have, a baby brother suddenly appearing in the nursery. Mother and nurse and grown-ups generally display an extraordinary interest in this small being, and the toddler naturally feels neglected. Parents

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and nurses are wrong and cruel in fostering jealousy, and in not establishing the right attitude of the toddler to his new relative. Children of two and three years may slap and kick, and even seriously injure, the baby, as a result of jealousy, which is the most hurtful and the most distressing of all emotions with the exception of fear.

Fear, as Darwin emphasized, is a devastating and destructive emotion. In its crude form it paralyses physical action, as most people have observed in the animal world; the hunted quarry is helpless with terror, without the power of movement which would ensure escape. So many people suffer from neurosis as a result of the fear emotion, that we should do everything we can to protect children against fear. The tiny baby is apprehensive, partly from inherited or racial fear, but largely because of the mistakes of the grown-up people around him. He is very sensitive to atmosphere, and an anxious fearful mother communicates her emotional tone to the child. All children are suggestible, and so we should suggest that thunder and lightning are "interesting", and that there is nothing in natural phenomena to

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be afraid of. If, on the other hand a grown-up person is afraid of thunder (as a result of wrong suggestions in childhood), this particular fear is handed on to the new generation. Fear of the dark is very real to some children, and it is cruel to refuse a nightlight and to accuse a child of cowardice. We should be sympathetic and sensible, suggesting to the child that when he grows bigger and older he will lose his fears. We must not be fearful about the risks to which every child is exposed. I have seen mothers in a frenzy of fear because of motor cars on country roads, which made the children in her charge apprehensive and frightened at the sound of a car. It is much better to tell the child of the risks of modern traffic and then leave him alone.

There are people who declare that fear is a useful disciplinary measure of education as a deterrent to antisocial behaviour. But we know that the inculcation of fear in the case of young children is a real danger which mothers should strive to avoid. Many apparently robust and healthy children suffer from night terrors and "fears" due to wrong suggestions in early childhood. The young child

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is afraid of strangers, of being left alone, of being deprived of the mother, of a hundred things, and this fear is wrongly used for disciplinary reasons. Fear is the emotion most likely to cause mental and nervous ills which may persist for years. It may produce improved behaviour, but it tends to retard development and impedes thought and mental progress.

A mother ought to study very carefully the type of nurse in charge of her children. The nurse should be warned against inculcating fear. To threaten a child with a tiger or a boggy man, an evil spirit or a policeman, is worse than stupid; it is dangerous to the child's future health and happiness. Horrifying prophecies in childhood are the chief source of "neurosis", of the misery of people who are always afraid, living in secret fears of crowds or closed spaces or trains or infections.

The best way to deal with ill behaviour, perverse ways, and bad habits in the nursery is to stimulate other interests without scolding or threatening or even calling very striking attention to any tendency or act we wish to arrest. Over-emphasis, especially in rebuke,

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is apt to make the child more interested in his particular sin, not through perversity but because that is how the human child mind works. What is forbidden is attractive until we are rational enough to understand why it is forbidden and to appreciate the reason as adequate and right. Happy interests are the mother's best weapons in child training.

The fearful child should be quietly talked to and asked to say what he is afraid of. Win his confidence ; never for a moment let him feel that he is cowardly, and suggest to him that he will grow out of his fears as he grows older.

Mothers are often worried as to how they should deal with such traits in their children as jealousy and fits of rage. I know a child of a few years of age who cannot be left alone with a baby brother. I know a child who suggested to a big sister that they should set fire to the nursery to get rid of " that horrid new baby ", and another less brutal young person who said the baby brother should be given to the policeman. Most children suffer from jealousy, sometimes to an alarming degree. Jealousy is a mixed and very painful emotion.

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It hurts the positive self-feeling of the child when a third person, i.e. the new brother, attracts the love from the beloved object. The mother often makes the mistake of stimulating this so easily aroused jealousy by paying too much attention to the youngest child of the family, by exaggerated praise and exhibitions of affection, with the result that the older children naturally try to take it out of "Mother's Darling". Jealousy inspires cruelty, and it is hard on the child who has a phantasy of himself as the perfect, adored boy, conflicting with the somewhat different picture of himself he is compelled to consider as a result of the sneers and home truths of his jealous young relations. Some children are more lovable, more "easy" than others. They are sweet natured and sociable and they give no trouble. But the child torn by jealousy is difficult. He sulks or rages, and feels out of the circle. He will do strange things to draw attention to himself, and will even welcome punishment if it brings his parents' notice and forgiveness and love. It is a paradox that the difficult, naughty, unlovable child needs love more than anything else. I know a child who screamed

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with rage at regular intervals. He was, his parents admitted, quite probably jealous of his younger brother who was easy, lovable, and good-looking. The screamer knew that his parents were terrified by his dramatic efforts, especially if he held his breath till he "made his face blue". He was scolded, punished, spanked, but he only got worse. He never had an attack when he went to stay with his grandmother, a very sensible lady incapable of being terrorized by small boys, nor when he visited his small cousins with whom he was a great favourite.

When his parents considered these points they agreed to try a new plan. If he screamed, very little notice was taken ; he was told that he felt "bad" because his stomach was out of order, which was perfectly true. He had been having five meals a day with plenty of starchy food, potatoes, rice, bread. So he was permanently cut down to three meals. He was also given less food for twenty-four hours after an attack. He was sent to bed half an hour earlier to "rest his nerves". He very soon realized that his parents were no longer afraid of his rages, and he very sensibly gave them

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up, and that was the solution of one psychological problem in the nursery.

The big-brother or -sister attitude must be fostered by the mother. "You will take care of baby" is a good suggestion, and "Do not hurt your baby sister" is a bad suggestion to make to any child, because it is negative and suggests the possibility of hurting and a desire to see the consequences. Make the toddler "help" to take care of baby, arrange the bath ceremonial, push the pram, put aside those of his own toys which, he should be told, are too babyish for him now but will come in nicely for the new-comer. Do not forget that the toddler resents bitterly the caresses he is used to being showered upon the baby. When the child of two or three is difficult and cruel to the baby, let the mother ask herself why, and see whether the cause is not due to lack of tact.

The sulky toddler is suffering from a sense of grievance; and in the nursery, as well as in the nation, legitimate grievances should be removed. Watch the child carefully, and try to find out (not necessarily by questioning) why he has changed from the cheerful,

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contented small boy to a sulky little boor. The cause may be physical. Excess of food or the wrong sort of food will make the child languid and depressed ; so it may be a good thing to give a day's semi-starvation and alter the diet. If the sulky attitude is due to a psychological cause, good management is necessary. The child of two or three must grow away from the sense of omnipotence (which is characteristic of the infant stage of life) to a sense of reality. He must accept discipline and learn self-discipline. He must realize that he is not the only person of importance in the house. It is difficult for parents to steer between the two great dangers of over-indulgence and too much display of love, and undue repression with too frequent use of the word " don't ".

Large families help children more than anything else to develop normally. Children educate each other and bring up each other. The danger of self-admiration is diminished if one belongs to a family of half-a-dozen boys and girls. One can hardly harbour any delusions about one's brain or beauty of face amidst the frank speaking that prevails in a

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well-populated nursery. The best hope for the only child is to send him for several hours daily to a crèche, where he will mix with his peers and get away from the dangerous admiration of his parents. One would like to see day nurseries established for poor middle-class mothers who, in these days of difficulties about servants, are often over-worked, and unable to get two hours' rest and recreation for days at a stretch. Such crèches would provide occupation for girls at present overcrowding the clerical and secretarial industries, and who are not yet sufficiently emancipated from social snobbery to go into domestic "service", which in properly managed households might provide a healthy, well-fed, and quite well-paid occupation for thousands of good-class girls to-day.

During these early years external impressions and stimuli make their mark for all time on the personality and character, so that later impressions are relatively of little importance. The mother's thoughts, her feelings and emotions, make at this time their indelible impressions on the subconscious mind of the child.

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It may be that the mother, pleasure-loving or engrossed with "Work", is not available for the only work, biologically speaking, that matters, and so the servant takes her place and becomes the mother-substitute. And that is one reason why the poor rich mothers so often fail to receive and retain love to the same extent as the mothers who feed and wash and love intensely their dear and dirty little offspring. We can never gain from the child of fifteen what we so carelessly let go when our children were ours at the mother phase.

Every woman should watch over her own child during the first seven years of life ; no other work in the world counts beside this creative mother-work. She must attend the child physically and study him psychically, if she is to adjust herself to life and to live it harmoniously.

A more enlightened method would save the new generation of children untold suffering and make for a happier family life. To satisfy curiosity, to give to the child opportunity for self-expression, for creating interesting things, to stimulate his sense of beauty, his love of

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nature, of birds and flowers, trees and sunshine—on these lines the parent interested in psychology works on behalf of the child. The old idea of repression, of the domination of the child by stupid adults, is giving way before a new ideal of liberating the energy and latent power in the young.

The study of child psychology will not only prevent neuroses, it will help to deal more wisely with delinquency, because we shall have greater knowledge of motive and its influence on conduct. There is so much good in human nature which never gets a chance. Sin, like disease, is ignorance. Quarrelling, discontent, and unhappiness are the visible signs of conflict, of sickness in the subconscious, just as the rash and the headache of measles are significant of physical illness from infection of the blood-stream.

The child of the future must be given a better chance of health and happiness. It is for us mothers to provide healthy occupation, and interesting work and play. The study of nature, both of the earth and of the heavens, and particularly that of living things, must occupy a far larger share of the educational

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curriculum of the future. The toddler is very curious and is constantly asking questions which should be very carefully answered. He is imaginative and makes strange statements which ignorant adults are too apt to call "lies". The more sustained the curiosity instinct is at this stage of life, the more will the child learn of his environment. The "whys" and "wherefores" of life make great demands upon the mother's patience and knowledge, but we must avoid direct refusal to answer questions, and the greater mistakes of evasion of truth and of insincerity. A child's questions can always be answered, and we must be prepared to go to any trouble to satisfy curiosity in the nursery. The imaginative sense becomes beautifully developed from the age of two years. There is an incessant demand for fairy-tales, mythical stories, and nonsense rhymes, and many children weave fairy-stories of their own with wonderful ability.

Interest in play displays itself in association with the love of wonder-stories, and there is evidence of new impulses which should be discouraged or encouraged according to whether

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these are undesirable or good. The impulse to help must certainly be encouraged. The toddlers' help is too often a hindrance to busy people ; but if this is repressed, as a result of adult discouragement, it will make all the difference to a child's disposition and character. The mind is very fluid at this time, and interest is not as a rule very long sustained. The child's mind wavers and is very ready to take up one thing after another, soon losing interest in any one occupation. The child is very suggestible and not very rational. He is apt to show evidence of fear at this stage, and this is partly because of his suggestibility, so that adults must be careful to avoid wrong suggestions which may leave lasting impressions. If a child cuts his finger, for example, and the mother shows alarm, there may be permanent fear of blood and apprehension of injury. Fear of lightning often develops at this stage as a result of the foolish behaviour of adults in a thunderstorm. Such punishments as shutting up a child in a room or in the dark are frequently followed by fear of closed spaces (Claustrophobia) which will persist and make unhappiness and neurosis through a

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lifetime. We must avoid psychological trauma, emotional shock, in early childhood. We must surround a child with happy suggestions and interesting work. We must watch, as has been said, for good impulses, the impulses to sympathize, to share duties with others, to be of service ; and we should encourage these by every means in our power. We must help the toddler to form good habits of tidiness and punctuality, to face reality, to meet difficulties with courage.

The child's mind or psyche is influenced for good or ill by the mother more than by any other human being. The mother, psychologically speaking, is the person who serves and guides the child, and yet there are women stupid enough to delegate this service to others. The mother must keep her privileges and hold fast to the best gift of life, the love bond between her and her child. She must use her power for the development of the child's character and personality.

Good or bad character is in part the consequence of good or bad habits. If baby is lifted when he cries, when he is exerting every ounce of lung power to get his own way,

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he is made self-indulgent, and so becomes undisciplined, with far-reaching consequences perhaps twenty years after. The wise mother makes baby keep regular hours, and she establishes regular habits. As he grows into the toddler stage, he should be helped to occupy himself happily, doing what to him is both work and play. Let him help as early as at three or four years to lay the table, wash up, dust the rooms, cut the flowers, even if it means more trouble, more time, and a few breakages. By such work we satisfy the child's desire for self-expression on healthy and useful lines, and so help to develop character and personality from the very beginning of life. We must answer a child truthfully when he asks questions, and not stifle his imagination. In every child's life fantasy plays a part. The make-believe of life is the poetry of life to the child.



CHAPTER III

CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

ONE reason why psychology is so important a subject to mothers, parents, and nurses is that it helps us to "manage children better". The old idea that a child must be dominated, compelled to be obedient, to show perfect courtesy to discourteous grown-ups, was responsible for many terrible scenes, "rows", and fits of passion between the combative, independent child and his parents. We believe nowadays that children must be made good not through fear, not by inflicting the rod, but by gradually making them realize that happiness is won by experiencing and following right desires and by developing the social sense.

In some children the social sense, as it is called, is very strong. A child will like easily and intensely his fellow-playmates and rela-

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tives, but a child with a strong social sense, when his sense is perverted, may come to hate some people exceedingly. It seems contradictory to say that a person of strong social feeling may become a hermit loathing the sight of his fellow-creatures, but the explanation is that his intense social feeling has somehow become perverted and the conflict within him finds expression in his dislike and avoidance of the herd. A child with an endowment of strong social feeling (which depends partly on his type, his inherited libido *) can be made by environment a remarkable power for good or evil. A child with weak social feeling is indifferent to people, neither likes them nor dislikes them, neither loves nor hates very much. But suggestion is a powerful factor for encouraging, for stimulating kindly human feeling; and a well-developed happy social sense is a great factor in successful living.

In early childhood, when the child is very suggestible, it is very important to foster a

* The term "libido" was originally the technical term for sex-desire. Of late years its meaning has been greatly extended, until now many psychologists use it as equivalent to vital energy.—*Editor.*

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kindly social tone in the nursery. Parents often harm children much more than they realize when they gossip unkindly about their friends and relatives. "Aunt Jane is always interfering, she should mind her own business," is one way of saying what could be as truly expressed by the statement, "Aunt Jane means well, and likes to help us because she is so interested in us and because she loves us" (which is perfectly true).

The social feeling will show itself in different ways according to the type of child. Dr. Jung, a famous psychologist, has given an interesting classification of "types". He divides people into two main groups, "extroverts" and "introverts". Persons in the first group are influenced very much by external factors. Extroverts care very much about what others think of them. An extrovert child likes to please his mother and to be in the good graces of his nurse and brothers and sisters. He easily adapts himself to his surroundings, he is not shy of people, he rarely suffers from fear. New experiences and new people interest him; he likes parties which make Mary, his introvert sister, shy and

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unhappy. "Mary is afraid of strangers," is the sort of thing that should be left unsaid. It is even unwise to say that Mary is shy. Mary must be encouraged to develop a more free and friendly attitude to people and to life. She should be praised when she comes out of her shell a little. "Mary is getting a big girl now, she is losing her shyness and was quite useful at the party," is the sort of remark that will help. Kindly remarks should invariably be made in her presence, keeping, of course, to the truth. Nearly every one of us can be praised for some quality.

The introvert type of child is apt to indulge too much in daydreams. She gets satisfaction from within, she is influenced by inner factors, by *her* opinions, and is apt to ignore the claims of other people and objects on her attention. "I know mother wants me to do this," she says, "but I won't." This is negativism, to which the unsociable child is very liable. Mismanaged, she grows into the self-centred, shy, friendless type, who is ready to admire what other people do not care for, to see beauty in what others do not appreciate.

What can we do for these children, these

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little boys and girls who are so often lonely in a big nursery? In the first place, we can cultivate their powers of self-expression in every way, encourage their spontaneity, their overtures of friendliness. Teach them to model with clay, to draw, because all self-expression on good lines helps them. Teach them that happiness comes by loving, and doing things for others, by giving both in material and spiritual ways. Do not question, do not argue, but *suggest* when you get the opportunity. Suggest that sociability is a duty, a pleasant duty after we have cultivated it for a time. Let the unsociable child be encouraged to ask his friends to the house and to go to see his special friends. Even the baby of five or six has in his social world some children he likes better than others. Very gradually the social sense will develop. Remember that these children are extremely sensitive; they have considerable self-love in their natures, so be careful not to hurt their pride. They are usually afraid of grown-ups whom they are apt to regard as hostile, critical beings. Our criticism of the child should always be tempered with sympathy and

understanding ; our chief aim should be to avoid injustice in our dealings with the small people in the nursery. To enter into a child's difficulties and perplexities, to give real sympathy, to avoid over-harshness and over-sentimentality—that is the mothers' and the nurses' duty in those early years, not perhaps a very easy task for most of us.

But how worth while is the work of character-building, of helping little children to make good "adjustments" to life, to grow towards the ideal of sharing the trials of others, of practising kindness, of giving unselfish service.

When we know even a little of how the mind works, we look upon "behaviour" quite differently from the way in which parents and nurses regarded it even twenty years ago. We no longer classify children as good and bad, normal and abnormal. For one thing we realize that no person is absolutely normal. We are all subject to obsessions ; and we are at the mercy of temporary emotional conditions which may affect our conduct or behaviour in a most extraordinary way. We see children of the same parents as different as they can be from each other. The mother may say,

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“ I brought them up in the same way ” (within the same environment, she means), “ why is my third child so ‘ difficult ’ ? ” She does not realize that the position in family, first child, second child, third child and so on does very greatly affect the character of the child. Also children are never treated in quite the same way, so that the “ environment ” for every child in the family is a different one. We must try to understand this, and we as parents and nurses are at least beginning to question ourselves. “ Why,” we may say, “ is Bridget a little demon ? why is Jack constantly fighting his innocent brother ? ” and we may, if we are nurses, think Mary a veritable angel because she gives us no trouble. The “ good ” child is placid, never quarrelsome, obedient, gentle ; she is perhaps pretty, beautifully behaved, not very robust sometimes, but occasionally as strong as a pony. Now the doctor’s idea of the “ good ” child *might* agree with the mothers’ and nurses’, but not necessarily so. The very goodness of Mary may be an evidence of physical or psychical inferiority. Mary may lack vital energy, lack “ libido ” or life force which makes the average

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healthy child restless, always "on the go", often naughty.

The cause may be physical, due to anæmia perhaps, or to decayed teeth. In the first instance the blood is deficient in quality and the organs are consequently ill-nourished. The brain cannot function so well as when fed with rich healthy blood ; so Mary is good because she feels tired and listless, and "cannot be bothered" doing anything very much. It is easier to sit quiet than to romp and shout with the others ; or Mary may feel tired because her teeth are decayed and she is absorbing poisons into the blood which affect her mind and body. It is well to make sure that the "angel" child is healthy by asking the family doctor to examine her.

The too good child may be lacking in nerve energy. She may be an "introvert" type who requires to be drawn out and encouraged to develop the play spirit and friendly social feeling towards the rest of the family or the "herd". The introvert child is shy, self-conscious, easily abashed, and nervous of the more robust types, and is sometimes better, happier, and healthier, if allowed to play with

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children a little younger than herself so that she loses her sense of inferiority. Lastly, Mary may be deficient in the "endocrine balance". The Thymus, the gland of childhood, may not atrophy (waste) as it should at puberty, and the other glands may be somewhat defective in their activities.

The child develops mentally through love of others, first of the parents, the mother and, later, the father. The best home for a child has two parents in harmony with each other, and working in co-operation for the family.

One of the chief dangers of childhood is over-indulgence ; if a child is spoilt he develops a phantasy of himself as perfect, wonderful, clever. This idea is not that of the world in which he grows up, so he refuses to face the truth—reality—and remains fixed psychologically in a state of childhood.

These "Peter Pans" of life are a trial to others, and they very readily develop neuroses or nervous ailments in after-life.

Another possibility is that parents, especially the father, may unduly repress a child by too much harshness, so that the child is afraid of authority all his life, and feels fearful

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and inferior. The "inferiority complex" may take the form of boasting or of bullying, both of which are signs of failing to grow up, of failing to become adjusted to life. A human being may remain fixed at any stage—nursery, school, or adolescence. A great many people in this present stage of civilization have never passed their psychological 'teens. Growing up has been so painful as to have become impossible.

I know boys of eighteen older psychologically than their fathers, and girls more really grown up than their mothers of forty.

The signs of failing to grow up are selfishness, egoism, self-admiration, the tendency to self-pity, and to feel oneself unappreciated. The world is full of "Mary Rose" women living miserably in a world of unreality. Why is growing up a painful process? Because the life of reality is difficult, often harsh, and sometimes unlovely. It is easier for children to live in the beautiful land of phantasy, to daydream the time away, to think themselves important and wonderful.

CHAPTER IV

THE STUDY OF CHARACTER

IT is a hopeful sign that the study of children is becoming popular, even fashionable. Young mothers are reading and attending lectures on child health and psychology, as well as taking an interest in infant clinics.

The study of character is particularly interesting to mothers. During the early years, when the child is at the "mother phase", great influence can be brought to bear on character by wise suggestion.

The mother also plays a part in the "father phase" period, which, psychologists tell us, lasts from six to ten or twelve years, the best results being obtained when both parents work harmoniously on behalf of the child. Hereditary influences are early perceived, and when these are adverse, a knowledge of psychology will

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help mothers who are interested in the development of character.

Apart from heredity, the mother has two practical considerations before her : The child's physical condition, and his environment.

A child's character is influenced by such physical conditions as septic teeth, adenoids, and enlarged tonsils, tubercular infection, and the after-effects of infectious diseases.

A child may be " lazy " because he is being poisoned by the absorption of toxins from decayed teeth ; this makes him listless, lacking in energy, unwilling to apply himself to school work. Remove the septic teeth, and the character alters.

The child with adenoids and enlarged tonsils will suffer from defective oxygenation of the blood ; and nervous irritability may arise from a lack of restful sleep. The sleeplessness is often caused by irritation of the brain cells by the poisoned blood.

Deafness is another consequence of adenoids ; it is due to the spreading of catarrh from the throat to the middle ear. Defective hearing may markedly affect the development of character. The child with defective hearing

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is called "stupid". He is handicapped in work, in play, and in the social activities of the herd; so he moves along the line of least resistance and becomes "a slacker".

In problems of character study we must not forget that delinquency, bad behaviour, is often caused by conflict in the subconscious, but the average mother should first take the line of eliminating any simple physical disabilities in the children whose characters call for study.

With regard to character development, the mother must :

1. Provide hygienic conditions, fresh air, exercise, good food : attention to personal hygiene helps character to develop along good lines.

2. Encourage healthy self-suggestion, provide sensible "discipline". Interesting occupation is important : boys and girls should take up hobbies and be urged to interest themselves in such movements as Boy Scouts and Girl Guides.

3. The family physician must deal with any existing physical disabilities, such as weak digestion, habit-spasms (e.g., facial contortions), sleeplessness, deafness, defective eyesight.

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In cases of recurring delinquency, some form of mental analysis may reveal the motive and help with a solution of the problem. Truancy, stealing, lying, cruelty in childhood are psychological symptoms which require the co-operation of doctors, parents, and teachers.

The words "good" and "bad" are often loosely used. The "good" child may lack energy to be what parents call "bad", that is noisy, restless, aggressive; whereas the troublesome, difficult boy or girl may require more outlet for abundant energy.

The importance of a good environment in character training can never be over-stated. The "nervous child" is a problem which we must try to solve. I went to tea recently with a young married couple whose baby of four months cried bitterly from the moment he caught sight of strangers in the drawing-room. I know of a small boy of two who screams if he wakes in the dark; and a child of six who is what his mother calls a "martyr to nerves". Many parents are worried unspeakably by evidence of nerves in the nursery. Attacks of bad temper, crying fits, stammering,

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night terrors are all signs of nervous tension which cannot be ignored ; and wise management of the nervous child will prevent a great deal of ill-health and unhappiness in after years. The neurasthenic, the victim of hysteria, the people suffering from “ psychoneuroses ”—all these are the consequence of wrong management of the children described as “ nervous ” in the nursery.

Special care must be taken of the child who stammers. The great thing is to check any tendency to stammering at the beginning. First find out whether the child thinks quickly, is intelligent and bright, whether he rushes his words because his thoughts run away with him. Such a child suffers acutely if he cannot express what he wishes to say. We must gain the child's confidence. By indirect questioning we should try to discover if he is afraid of anyone : for example, his nurse or his father ; or his mother may have suggested “ fear ” to him, fear of the dog, or of the policeman, or fear of thunder, or of the dark. The stammering indicates conflict in the subconscious. Then quietly and consistently suggest not fear but happiness. Stammering, on the other

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hand, may be the result of desire for attention ; give the child opportunity for self-display of a more useful type, in singing, elocution, etc.

Every story told to a child should have the message of interest, love, and hope of present and future happiness.

Attend to the physical health of the nervous child. If the digestion is satisfactory, the old-fashioned cod-liver oil and malt, or extra milk or cream, and plenty of rest are helpful. The nervous child needs extra rest and sleep. It is inadvisable to allow too much excitement, especially at bedtime ; and a quiet, tranquil life, with plenty of fresh air and sunlight and nourishing food, will go far to counteract any tendency to nerves. If a child has a habit of stammering, or if he suffers from "tics", or habit-spasms, do not on any account find fault or draw attention to the condition. Suggest to the child "breathing exercises" to develop the chest. Try what singing and rhythmic dancing on the lines of eurhythmics will do. Teach him recitations with, if possible, pianoforte accompaniments. Help him with your sympathy and understanding. Above all remember the power of suggestion. By

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your voice and manner and facial expression you can help him or make him infinitely worse. A quiet, assured, kindly voice and manner, encouragement, sympathy, the suggestion that he is "less nervous, less nervous", that he is losing his tendency to stammer and to "nerves"—on such lines splendid work can be done to help the nervous child.

Physical delicacy will affect character.

There is a law in psychology which is sometimes called the "Way of Compensation". When a child is delicate, when, for instance, he is born with a weak heart or when he develops a delicate digestion, nature or the unknown Power behind nature helps him in rather a wonderful way. From every organ to the brain there is a "Psychic track". From any inferior organ this track is specially sensitive, as if the psyche desired to help and guard a sick organ by sending to it a specially generous allowance of energy. To compensate for physical inferiority, a special psychical power is bestowed.

A nurse may notice that sensitiveness and sympathy are displayed by the little boy whose digestion is rather a worry to himself, a

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responsibility to anyone who is in charge of the nursery. She may observe that Mary, whose heart was damaged by rheumatic fever, seems afterwards to develop unusual courage and stability. She may notice these things, but she may not understand the psychological reason. Some people believe that a defective organ not only develops in the psyche special qualities, but that it is a factor in producing genius. Great musicians have suffered from defective hearing, the inferior organ being the ear, absolute health of which we might all believe to be essential to musical ability. On the contrary, Beethoven, Mozart, Schumann, all suffered from ear trouble or deafness. Demosthenes, who had a genius for oratory, in his youth was afflicted with a painful stammer.

In more modern times we find "delicate" children making their mark in the world. Darwin was never really well for over thirty years. A daughter of Professor Huxley once told me that when Mrs. Darwin asked the cook to make some special dish for her husband, she said: "Well, ma'am, if the master would do a little work instead of playing with these

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worms and things, he would be healthier." The gifts of Robert Louis Stevenson are another example of "compensation", his imagination in association with a delicate physique being stimulated through psychic tracks; and Edison, to whom we owe so much in modern scientific discoveries, has defective hearing with intellectual compensation. The absolutely healthy child misses perhaps the delicate psychic response which the stimulated psychic track confers on the delicate boy or girl. Mothers and nurses of delicate children may find comfort in this theory, that illness is often compensated by exceptional psychical, artistic, or intellectual development.

On the other hand, it is important to help children to a true compensation. Genius is a gift conferred upon a small minority of human beings in each generation. A sense of inferiority, such as we find when a child is lame or deaf or very delicate, may cause him to develop a fiction of personal importance and grandeur to compensate for his affliction. A deaf child may, if unwisely handled, dominate a household. With tempers and whines he may become the one important

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person of the family, every one giving way through mistaken pity and unwise sentimentality. This is an example of compensation by fiction.

How are you, the mother or nurse, to achieve compensation through reality? You can help the deaf child to understand that if he will study hard and learn lip-reading, he will, through the discipline this requires, reach a higher standard of efficiency and character than would have been possible if he had possessed normal hearing. Tell him that in this way the great composers with defective hearing achieved distinction, by hard unremitting toil combined with their special gifts. So also the child that is delicate and ambitious in sport must develop his muscles by special exercises and a healthy life, to achieve success in games. One of the lessons we must help the child to learn from life is to get away from self-deception and phantasy to the world of reality.

CHAPTER V

THE DIFFICULT CHILD

MOST of the intelligent parents and nurses and teachers of today have deleted "wicked" from their vocabularies. When I was young, it was "wicked" to ask questions because one's elders did not want to answer or could not answer what one wanted to know. It was "wicked" to fidget, to laugh, or to want to run about, for rules and regulations did not provide for activity and joy; the good child should keep quiet. We know a little more about life and character and personality today. We know that children differ in vitality, in the life-force. We know that the boy or girl is often wrongly called wicked because guardians and teachers fail to recognize that energy is something which must either be wisely expressed or unwisely repressed. The "wicked" child is usually full

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of energy, with the sap of life bursting forth at what we may call inopportune moments. I am no advocate of lack of discipline, or of allowing a child to become a public or private nuisance, but I think we should get away from the habit of constantly finding fault, of manufacturing wicked children all the time.

I should never use the word "wicked" to a child. If a small boy is troublesome, noisy, always knocking himself about, find him some work so that he may use up his energy. Realize that the child is not finding real interests in the task you give him ; so find him some other pursuit about which he will become enthusiastic.

The nursery child is often "wicked" because he is being unwisely fed, perhaps with an excess of starchy foods. His appetite is capricious, he will not eat at stated meal-times, he dislikes the dishes provided ; what is to be done ? He should not be called "wicked", he should not be coaxed to eat. By the first method you suppress him, and produce an inferiority complex ; by the second you flatter him in the wrong way and encourage his egoism. You may conclude that as he

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is "not hungry", the stomach should have functional rest. In simple language you cut out feeding-times for twenty-four hours, letting him have water in abundance, exercise, rest and peace. After that you will have no trouble with regard to food ; and the wicked boy may be transformed into a likeable young person who appreciates his meal-times, is easy in his behaviour, and approaches the ideal offspring of the average parents' dreams.

The wicked child, so long as he is normal, and not morally or mentally defective, may in the late 'teens and twenties become a credit to his parents. It is essential, although admittedly difficult, to diagnose defects in one's own children. Is your child "good" through lack of personality, is he "wicked" because his energy is abundant or because he is mentally defective ?

When I was a medical inspector of schools, I came across a certain number of children who were classified as "unbalanced". Unlike the "wicked" child, these children's trouble seemed to be beyond a physical explanation, something at least that could not be explained by excessive vitality or influenced

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by simple good management. They were, in fact, on the borderline. The borderland child has a certain *irritability* which seems to be due to a very nervous disposition. He displays a restlessness, an incapacity to attend, which would make most mothers and nurses very impatient. I am always sorry for these children, even when they are obstinate, deceitful, and boastful. It is useless to punish them. One notices that punishment only makes them angry and sullen. And yet the unbalanced child must be disciplined. In many cases the mother or nurse is too apt to neglect discipline through fear of conflict and trouble. A child quickly discerns moral cowardice of this sort, and becomes more boastful and even brutal in his attitude to the little family herd in which he lives. That is because the unbalanced child is always egoistic, ego-centric, with either an excessively exaggerated opinion of himself or, more rarely, the opposite quality, a deep sense of inferiority. His boastfulness is in such cases an endeavour to make himself and his world regard him with admiration and fear.

Pride is the dominant emotion of "border-

lands", and it is by tactfully and cleverly ministering to their pride that they are most satisfactorily disciplined in the early stage of their education. These children should be praised for good conduct and good work, whenever we can honestly praise them. We should show appreciation if Susan puts her toys and books tidily in the cupboard instead of tearing them in a paroxysm of bad temper. We should praise her also if she takes a motherly interest in her dolls after a period of smacking and flinging them on the floor. It might be suggested that "little girls" are careless of the comfort and cleanliness of their toy babies, but "big girls" are always motherly and kind to dolls and animals and tiny children.

If you notice that a highly nervous, excitable, difficult child is cruel, you have here another sign of instability. That is, of course, in the right sort of home, where courtesy is practised and where no bad example of cruelty is shown. What are you to do? Severe punishment will in most cases harden the offender; his cruelties may be hidden from you in the future, but you are not eradicating the evil tendency. The better plan is, after explaining why kindness

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and consideration of others are desirable in the home, in the nation, and the human herd generally, to give the child something which will draw love and care from him. The giving of a pet which he must feed and take care of will often cure cruelty when other expedients in the form of scoldings and punishments have failed.

Now whilst the borderland child is not "mentally defective", and may even show brilliant qualities, the average borderland is not usually "good at lessons". He quickly tires, and finds sustained attention extraordinarily difficult. The defective child is often good and sweet and lovable. The borderland or ill-balanced child is apt to be a nuisance, always naughty, unreliable, often impertinent. It takes all a mother's love and doctors' and nurses' patience to deal successfully with one of this type. But when he is "not good at lessons", try him with other than purely mental subjects in his nursery lessons. Plasticine and clay for modelling will help to develop his "motor" ability and his muscular co-ordination, which means the better working of the muscles in unison with one

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another, especially the muscles of the hands and arms with the eye-muscles. Teach him geography by means of making maps on the nursery cork linoleum, by drawing on the brown paper attached to the nursery walls. These are pursuits of medical and psychological importance. They keep a child occupied and yet give opportunity for movement. The ill-balanced child is always restless, so that it is useless to worry him to "keep still", and not to "fidget". You might as well ask a child suffering from measles not to develop a rash and temperature "for mother's sake". If, as mother or nurse, you have to deal with one of these difficult, ill-balanced boys or girls, who has perhaps inherited a streak of ancestral instability from which the rest of the family have been spared, follow these rules :—

1. Avoid "punishment".
2. Praise when you can.
3. Show some measure of trust to encourage straight dealing.
4. Give little tasks and duties likely to appeal to the child.

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5. Watch for any special aptitude, either manual or artistic, and give opportunity for its development.
6. Do not expect too much from the poor little ill-balanced child.

In every family varied types are found, and each needs different treatment. The introvert, afraid of life, is helped by encouragement to accomplish more, to develop self-assurance and self-esteem. The extrovert, over-bold and too self-confident, is wet-blanketed at times for his own good.

The child's imagination has not so much to be "developed" as to be given an opportunity to blossom, to come to perfection. The phantasies and dreams of childhood are part of life's wealth; the fears and phobias of youth are so easily dissipated if wisely dealt with. But everywhere we see misunderstanding, mismanagement, often the direct result of our ignorance of child psychology.

There are children who suffer intensely from fears which they can never express: the War, with the general apprehension it produced, the talk of air-raids and the effects of experiencing

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them in some instances, has increased the number of such children.

Fear cannot be dissipated by such measures as whipping or by insisting that the frightened child should cry himself to sleep in the dark. The small boy is only too anxious to conquer his terrors; even more so is the big boy, because fears and night-terrors are not infrequently the lot of children even of fourteen or fifteen years of age.

We know that cowardice is often a matter of gland deficiency. Deficiency of pituitary secretion produces a moral and intellectual inferiority, whilst the adrenal glands situated on top of the kidneys are called the glands of combat, because of their influence on fight, flight, and fear. Those who are rich in adrenal secretion are not fearful but pugnacious. There is hope that the psychological chemist through new discoveries may help us to deal with the problem of fear, in children especially. Fresh air, restful nights, light and nourishing diet, no heavy meal within three hours of bedtime, are excellent rules. Above all, banish from the nursery terrifying stories of ghosts, and avoid exciting, lurid picture-shows.

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Some children are difficult through a habit of "negativism".

When we are children we want always to do what our elders say we must not. "Don't fidget" produces in every small boy an irresistible desire for activity. Some wail the harder when sympathetic people say, "Don't cry." So also to most of us who remain children till the end of life, anything that is "forbidden" becomes the more alluring.

I often think that mothers would manage better if the word "don't" were used with more discretion. "You can't do that" is immediately met by the question "Why can't I?" "I don't like your friend," says the unwise mother who does not understand that any normal boy or girl will cling the closer to that friend. Forbidden fruit is sometimes sweet and generally dangerous. Everybody requires a little management if we want him or her to do what we wish and what we feel is for the best; and most children are managed by indirect suggestion, by anything except a definite, emphasized "don't".

Anybody with a knowledge of psychology realizes that in place of "don'ts" in dealing

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with children we must substitute positive suggestions. "Look out of the window" is infinitely better than "Don't go out of that door." "Play with your aeroplane" is the right suggestion when a child is restless, when "Don't fidget" is absolutely wrong. Even when we know that trouble will follow, it is often wiser to refrain from inviting a definite refusal to obey a definite command. "The burnt child dreads the fire." Children are often best safeguarded as a result of a mistake which adds to their experience of life.

Most people who call themselves educated accept the modern doctrine that brute force should not be used towards the child. But there are parents whose idea of punishment is still mediæval, whose understanding of the child mind is extraordinarily limited. They regard as sins what are in reality evidence of a child's intelligence. They help the baby to build his bricks, and cannot understand why baby howls when his glorious idea of creating something himself is frustrated by a stupid grown-up. "Bad baby for crying," says the parent; but no words can express the child's indignation against his well-meaning parent.

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"Don't, don't," says nurse, who is a little irritable, perhaps because she is not feeling well. Little Tommy finds that everything he wants to do comes under the category of "Don't", and of course he wants to do it all the more.

I watched a mother mismanage a child the other day. We were having tea. "Don't fidget, Mary," "don't keep moving about," "don't sit on the floor." There were so many "Don'ts" that if I had been Mary I would have started to break the teacups to relieve the nervous tension her mother's methods induced in me, as well as in the poor little "nervy" child. Mary had no peace. She was continually being pushed into "negativism".

The right method with Mary was to give up "Don'ts" and try the affirmative instead. "Sit on the sofa, Mary, and look at this picture-book" is better. Above all, give Mary something to do that she is likely to want to do. A pencil and some scribbling-paper will amuse a child for perhaps half-an-hour, but the human mind, especially the child mind, gets bored and needs change of occupation.

The world is full of children mismanaged by fussy parents, who do not give the nursery

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people a chance. Remember that civilization makes life difficult for children. By the time we are thirty or forty most of us accept, fairly philosophically, the restrictions and artificiality of civilized life. We have forgotten our youth, with all its resentment, its love of adventure, its dreams and aspirations. We no longer want to explore ; we are, most of us, in a word, " well behaved ", or at least we seem so on the surface. But the veneer on top of the primitive wears very thin at times.

Every doctor knows that " play " is a magical remedy for nervous ills. You do not let your children play as they want to play. You make silly rules about not getting their clothes soiled, their hands dirty. You make a fuss when they are what you call " naughty ". And then you complain that they are disobedient, that they are " nervy ", and stupid about going to bed in the dark, perhaps.

Well, it is largely the home environment that has made them nervy and difficult to manage. Never refuse a night-light, never jeer at a child's fears. Many of these fears are racial: they come from subconscious memories of primitive times.

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Mismanagement in the nursery is responsible for a vast amount of hysteria and neurasthenia in after-life. The doctors of the future will prevent these ills by helping parents to understand the little children of two and three and four years of age infinitely better than they do at present. There are too many nursery rules in most households. I would make the following rules and scrap most of the others :—

1. Leave the child alone.
2. Do not find fault more than is necessary.
Explain your reasons whenever you can.
3. Cultivate regularity and punctuality.
4. Exact obedience, but be tactful about it.
5. Never make a child look foolish before other people.
6. Do not "talk down" to children ; they are apt to despise you. The child of four or five years should be treated as an equal, a rational being. Intelligence has nothing to do with age.

CHAPTER VI

DIET AND THE HEALTH OF THE CHILD

EVERY book on dietetics groups food into certain categories :—

1. Proteins or body-builders.
2. Carbohydrates or energy-givers.
3. Fats or fuel-foods.
4. Mineral substances.
5. Water.

The human body is composed of millions and millions of microscopic cells. A cell consists chemically of the same elements as the food we eat, the food which, after digestion and absorption, becomes blood and bone and muscle and brain. Perhaps that is the reason why thought and characters are affected by food, why a child fed on excess of starch or excess of flesh meat is influenced not only in health of body but in mind also. Food is required to

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produce new cells for new growth and for tissue repair. For such a purpose foods called "proteins" are essential: such are—fish, lean meat, fowl, eggs, milk and cheese, peas, beans, and nuts. Vegetables and fruits contain so little protein that we can leave them out of this class of body-building foods. Sugars and starches and fats produce heat and energy.

An adult man of the well-to-do classes, if he has a considerable amount of meat in his daily diet, will eat about two pounds weight of food, whilst a vegetarian would require to eat twice that amount if it contained no meat, in order to get sufficient protein. An adult requires food which has an energy value equal to 3,000 Calories. A Calorie is the amount of heat required to raise one kilogram (one and three-quarter pints) of water one degree centigrade in temperature. A woman requires about 2,500 Calories, and a boy or girl of fourteen or fifteen years should have as much protein food as a man or woman respectively. A child of ten requires nearly as much as a woman; and a small person of five will eat half as much as his father or mother.

Young people who are still growing require

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proportionately more protein food than grown-up people. If we could see the tissues of children microscopically, we should be amazed at the rapid growth and active reproduction of the cells as the bones lengthen and the muscles change and grow longer and stronger. Children also are far more active and energetic than adults and they have a relatively large skin area or body-surface, so that they lose heat more rapidly, and require, in proportion, more "heating" foods than adults.

Mothers and nurses should study dietetics, because a knowledge of food values and the art of cooking would prevent ill-health and ill-behaviour in nursery and schoolroom. Flesh meat is not necessary in the nursery: if fish, cheese, eggs, and milk are used judiciously and varied with a little chicken or rabbit, beef or mutton should only be provided perhaps once or twice a week.

With regard to quantities of food in the daily dietary, the grown-up person may be said to require in daily allowances approximately four ounces of protein, four ounces of fat, and sixteen ounces of carbohydrate. Children, however, require a larger proportion of protein

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and of fat, because of their growth and energy. Milk is the one perfect food, in that it contains all the "proximate principles" and necessary ingredients of a complete diet, including mineral salts, vitamins, and water.

If I were asked for only one rule where nursery menus were concerned, I should reply, "Give more milk, fruit, and vegetables, and cut down your starches." That is because nine children out of ten eat too much starchy food—bread, potatoes, oatmeal, beans, peas, rice, tapioca, biscuits, rusks, and cake. Starch and sugar belong to the carbohydrate group of foods, which in their proper amount are very valuable. They supply us with energy, they are cheap, they form the main part of the diet of the poor people. But the diets of children, rich and poor alike, generally show an excess of carbohydrate. With what result? Too much carbohydrate causes what doctors call the status catarrhalis, or a tendency to catarrh of the mucous membranes of the body, catarrh of the respiratory passages with bronchitis, catarrh of the digestive canal with attacks of indigestion and diarrhoea. Every doctor associated with child-welfare clinics knows the

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status catarrhalis type of child—pale, fretful, often fat, always having one or other catarrhal ailment. What is the remedy? Cut down the starchy foods. Let the mother and nurse give very little wholemeal bread, no biscuits, cakes, or rusks, no potatoes, no rice or sago puddings. Give broth made with plenty of vegetables, gravy, eggs, milk, minced meat, and steamed green vegetables, fish with butter or egg-sauce, and fruit.

Give up sugary foods, and give sugar in the form of fresh syrup or honey. Sugar is an easily digestible carbohydrate; starch must be converted into sugar by the digestive juices (saliva of the mouth and pancreatic juice) before it can be absorbed into the blood. Excess of sugar is, however, dangerous. A too liberal allowance of chocolate, "candy", or jam means that less protein or body-building food is taken, and that there is not "room" enough for the fruits and vegetables so necessary in a well-mixed diet. A change of diet in most nurseries would benefit the family. The children would become more contented, they would sleep better and would be less liable to "colds" and catarrhs.

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White bread is one of the worst starchy offenders if it is used in excess. Experiments made on newly born rats have shown that, when weaned and put on a diet of starchy food, they develop rickets because this diet lacks certain vitamins and mineral salts which are essential to healthy growth. A little white bread is harmless if the diet is in other respects well mixed, but wholemeal bread is much superior for nursery fare. A well-balanced nursery daily menu should contain milk, preferably pasteurized, eggs, vegetables, soups, whole-wheat bread or cakes, whole-grain porridge, fruit (orange, apple, grapefruit, and stewed rhubarb, prunes, figs), potatoes baked in their skins and served with butter, granulated sugar, honey, fresh vegetables and salads in season, and once daily at most, a little chicken, rabbit, or English beef or mutton. Children should not be given ham, sausage, or any tinned food, corned beef, or salted or preserved food, such as kippers, salt herring and tinned salmon. Nuts are useful foods in the nursery, and the children should be taught thorough mastication. Coffee and tea are not really suitable beverages for children ; cocoa and milk and chocolate

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are better, although rules may be broken occasionally to give variety to the nursery menus. Fats are very valuable foods in childhood ; and children who are overfed with carbohydrates are often starved of fat.

We may divide fats into animal and vegetable ; and it is interesting to know that the animal fats, butter, cream, cod-liver oil, and suet, contain the very important vitamin A, which is the particular vitamin that has the power of preventing rickets. The vegetable fats, olive oil, almond oil, cotton-seed oil, do not contain this vitamin, and strangely enough lard is also defective in vitamin. This may be because, as Dr. Plimmer says, the pig is not fed on green food, and green plants are in nature the primary source of this vitamin which makes all the difference to health and happiness in the nursery. I think there is a very real danger of the mothers of all classes giving too little animal fat with its valuable vitamins to children. Subconsciously, many mothers seem to feel this, and so press lumps of hideous fat meat on their protesting offspring. We all have memories of our nursery days and nightmare recollections of " leaving a

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clean plate", which usually mean swallowing fat with nausea, or pocketing it when the eye of authority was averted. It is far better to give the children small doses of cod-liver oil in the wintertime, when milk is deficient in its vitamin A content, because of the artificial feeding of the cows. The wise mother gives fat in a more palatable way. She gives bread and butter, thin bread and thick butter ; she gives suet puddings with honey or stewed fruit in winter, junket and cream, and cream and stewed fruits in season all through the spring, summer, and autumn months. She believes in good milk in the nursery. One of the best meals for a child is wholemeal bread and butter and a tumbler of milk and an egg, with an apple or orange ; this provides food value in abundance and in an easily digested form. In some homes the children are given bread and butter or bread and jam, which is bad economy ; the children should have all three at tea-time with fruit as well.

Faddiness is another cause of unsuitable dietaries. Some mothers have a prejudice against eggs, saying that they cause constipation ; others give no meat, and meat (although

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often eaten to excess) must be regarded as a valuable protein food, especially during the school-age. Children are given white fish instead of the more valuable herring, and, worse still, steamed fish when fried fish is more nourishing, because of the fat and the vitamin it contains. Rice and sago puddings, nursery fare popular with mothers and nurses, but detested, and rightly so, by the children, are in no way to be compared with the suet (fat) puddings they love. By studying dietetics we mothers get away from fads and prejudices, and realize that it is possible to feed children well and to please them at the same time. To that end variety is essential for physiological as well as psychological reasons. "Natural" foods, that is, fruit and vegetables, should be given in abundance to children, as they get the necessary mineral salts as well as vitamins from them.

Every woman interested in diet should know something about "vitamins". There is not so very much to know as yet about their chemical composition; but we have learned that they are very necessary substances, and that food must contain them if we are to escape

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what are called "deficiency diseases", such as rickets and scurvy. Considering their importance, they are present in extremely small quantities, forming less than a millionth part of the food we consume. For the sake of convenience these substances have been called A, B, and C. There is also a D vitamin, but much less is known of it than of the others. Vitamin A is found in animal fats (except lard), in egg, and in milk, in meat (especially liver and kidney), in *green* vegetables and in the grain of wheat. Cod-liver oil is valuable chiefly because of this vitamin, which is so essential in the prevention and cure of rickets. Butter and cream are rich in vitamin A. Every diet should contain milk and green vegetables, because milk contains all the vitamins; and the green vegetables are especially useful to counteract the deficiency of vitamins in cereals and seeds.

Vitamin B is especially necessary in children's diet. It is found in eggs, milk, wheat-grain, peas, beans, lentils, yeast, nuts, kidney and liver. Thus soups made of peas, beans, and lentils, especially if milk is added, are to be recommended, because they are nourishing

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and also well supplied with this particular vitamin (B).

Vitamin C is also necessary for health and development. It is found in lemons and oranges, and in lemon-juices, fresh cabbage, raw turnip, and onions. It is found in milk, like all the other vitamins, but it is easily destroyed by heat, so that boiling or even pasteurizing the milk destroys its anti-scorbutic value. This vitamin prevents scurvy, which in olden days was rife in sailing-ships, as the men had to live for weeks and even months on tinned and chilled foods. Now we know why fresh fruits and vegetables are so essential to health.

A good diet would have a fair allowance of these, and of milk, and fish, fowl, and fresh meat. A poor diet would be one that largely consisted of white bread, margarine, and tinned foods ; but if salads and fresh vegetables were added, the ill effects would be reduced by at least fifty per cent. Tomato is an excellent fruit, but it should be eaten fresh and in season, when it contains all three vitamins.

While the majority of people prefer white

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bread, because it is more palatable than brown, most of us are aware that wholemeal is much better, and that is because it contains a little more protein and some of the vitamin B. If we have a varied diet, which is also nutritious, the kind of bread we eat is not so serious as many people assert. So long as we get our vitamins and our due allowance of protein, fat, carbohydrate, and mineral salts, the sources of these can be modified according to taste. When bread is the main article of diet, which it ought never to be, then wholemeal bread or brown bread containing malted starch is preferable to white bread. Bread whitened artificially, which is made from bleached flour, is not nearly so desirable a food as the ordinary white bread made from roller-milled flour. Oat-cakes and meal scones are excellent food-stuffs, and if only for traditional and patriotic reasons they should find a place at every table.

Three meals a day and no "snacks" (nothing but water between meals) should be an invariable rule.

A suitable day's diet for children at the kindergarten or school age would be :—

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Breakfast : Porridge ; fish, toast and butter ;
cocoa made with milk ;

or Eggs ; brown bread and butter ;
honey ; very weak tea with plenty of
milk.

Dinner : Vegetable stew with suet dumplings
and a very little meat ; stewed fruit and
junket ;

or Pea soup ; fried or boiled fish, with
butter or egg-sauce ; fresh fruit.

Tea-Supper : Brown bread and butter ; syrup ;
fruit ; chocolate and milk ;

or " Pull bread " ; light cake ; honey ;
a little scrambled egg ; milk.

Mothers are often puzzled to know what to do when their children refuse one or other article of food. Should they be made to eat egg or drink milk, for instance, when they say they dislike these foods ?

In some instances the cause is psychological. An over-indulgent nurse or mother has encouraged them to be fastidious, and they have a subconscious belief that they are more delicate and interesting if they are exceptionally particular about food. A parent or nurse, on the other hand, may be too harsh and may

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have forced them to eat food which aroused revulsion, so that a permanent unpleasant impression about cauliflower or tapioca or fat or eggs has remained through the years.

There is another reason why certain people find various articles of diet impossible to take—a physiological reason, which has to do with constitutional super-sensitiveness. There are children who *cannot* eat eggs or strawberries or shell-fish without digestive disturbance or nettle-rash as a consequence. That is, they have an idiosyncrasy where some foods are concerned, although they may not know for many years the particular food to which they are sensitive. A whole family may be unduly sensitive to a group of protein foods—for example, egg-white, rabbit, or peas.

Most authorities on dietetics advise the inclusion of milk and green vegetables in daily diet, because these articles are protective foods, in that they are rich in vitamins, and so they make up for any vitamin deficiencies. But even milk may be an "allergen" (a substance to which a person is super-sensitive), and its removal from the diet may help considerably

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to cure asthma or hay fever or chronic digestive disturbance.

It is known that asthma is often due to "sensitization," although the allergen is not so frequently a food as some substance like horsehair or feathers or some kind of dust. A hair mattress, a feather pillow, even a particular face-powder, may be the cause of an attack. In hay fever there is super-sensitiveness to the pollen of grasses ; and even a certain form of epilepsy has been caused by food susceptibility to such apparently innocent articles of diet as vegetable proteins, or meat or fish protein.

The food question in its relation to health is extremely important, and the housewife and mother who is observant will often discover sensitiveness in some so-called delicate child.

Every woman who is concerned with providing food must realize that a positive dislike for any particular food should not be ignored.

Aversion from any article of diet is an indication that we are better without it. It is cruel to force children to eat what they hate. They should be allowed to refuse food on the understanding that they wait to eat until the

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next meal if they cannot satisfy their hunger with what is set before them.

We are only beginning to understand allergens and sensitiveness. It is not only on the physical plane that sensitiveness is displayed.

The child who is wrongly fed suffers from indigestion. Digestion should be a process of which we are not aware. If as soon as pain were felt, pain being Nature's warning of physiological sins, mothers realized the seriousness of neglect, half the illnesses in the community would be prevented. An enumeration of the diseases which follow upon neglected "indigestion" would include most of the known ills of mankind, cold in the head among them.

While eating too much is one cause of indigestion, eating too little or too frequently will in time spoil the digestion of the strongest child. Above all, it is the quality of food that counts; during the last fifty years food has steadily deteriorated.

White flour, beet sugar, tinned foods, frozen meat, polished rice, and sterilized milk bring in their train many diseases in our imperfect civilization. The canned and packed foods

save the housewife the work she ought to do, and increase her own and her family's liability to disease a hundredfold. Our grandparents' food was more natural and more healthful, because it contained the vitamins in ample quantity, and made people use their teeth in a way that the present "refined" foods do not require.

The best foods for indigestion are naturally those which are most easily digested, first of all, milk, which children so often protest they cannot digest. This may be true if the milk is taken in addition to heavy foods; but what a baby of one day old can live on will, when properly taken, suit older children who have temporarily ruined their digestive power by wrong food. Skim-milk is more easily digested than full milk, and it is a cheap, valuable protein food, lamentably neglected in this country.

Ordinary milk, one-quarter diluted with water or soda-water, taken in sips, a half-pint every four hours, may constitute all the food that it is wise to take for a couple of days after "indigestion". Gradually other foods may be added: a lightly cooked egg, stale

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bread and butter, dry toast, arrowroot, beef-tea, chicken broth, and fish. The most easily digested kinds of fish are sole, flounder, plaice, whiting, turbot, and haddock. Lightly cooked fresh English meat can be given in small quantities at first, but sweetbread, chicken, and pheasant are more easily digested.

All heavy foods, pastries, cakes, sweets, uncooked fruits and vegetables, starchy food, rice, potato, and white bread, are undesirable, except in the most minute quantities, for any children whose digestion is imperfect. Unsuitable fish are shell-fish, sprats, salmon, herring, sardines, anchovies, and whitebait.

“ Natural ” food prevents disease and infections. Animals in a state of nature are perfectly immune from the ugly illnesses of civilization ; tamed, in captivity or bondage, fed with the artificial foods we ourselves eat, animals will develop most of the ills of human beings, from pneumonia to appendicitis.

In spring and summer we have no excuse for neglecting natural foods, especially fruits and vegetables, of which mothers should supply fifty per cent. more than they do. From these

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foods certain mineral salts are derived which are essential to bodily health, and which keep the body resistant to infection.

A lack of absorbable calcium, for instance, in the diet is associated with a predisposition to tuberculosis. Juicy fruits contain calcium and potassium. Iron is found in spinach and in other green vegetables, in yolks of eggs and in apples, as well as in lentils, beans, peas, meat, and milk. Common salt is a particularly important mineral, but most physiologists consider that we get sufficient of it in our dietary without the assistance of the salt-cellar.

Fruit is a delightful vehicle for minerals and vitamins. Fruit should be taken by every child at breakfast. Oranges, apples, grape-fruit, stewed prunes and stewed figs are useful breakfast fruits. A dish of whole-grain porridge, wholemeal bread or toast, butter, and syrup, a lightly boiled or poached fresh egg are excellent breakfast foods in the nursery.

Good spring-time dishes are creamed parsnips or carrots, served in the stock, spring cabbage, milk, cheese, all young vegetables, all fruits in season. The housewife should grow

mustard and cress for salads, so that they may always be fresh and clean.

The best preventives of illness in the nursery are fresh natural food, skyshine, sunshine, and an abundance of fresh air.

CHAPTER VII

SUNLIGHT AND HEALTH

HIPPOCRATES, the Father of Medicine, preached the doctrine of heliotherapy or the sunlight cure to your ancestors and mine four hundred years B.C. In the little island of Cos, then part of ancient Greece, there was a great temple of health, where the priests were physicians who taught the people to worship the god of the sun, medicine, and music. No country has produced more perfect specimens of human beings than the Greeks of that time, and Grecian athletes were nearly as famous as Grecian poets and philosophers. The agencies of light, air, water, and music were used for the prevention of disease and for mental and physical culture.

During the Roman era and also amongst the early Christians, the sun was worshipped

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by the people ; but with the revolt against Paganism and all its teachings, even those things pregnant with scientific truth were sacrificed. Thus for hundreds of years mankind has neglected the greatest blessing of natural life—sunshine.

The best of all physicians is the sun which, when rightly understood and served, gives health, happiness, and beauty to human beings. Life depends on sunlight ; without light there would be neither animal nor vegetable life on this planet. With insufficient sunlight, sickness is rife and infectious diseases work havoc among the children of the world. Many years ago in Japan I realized the value of sunlight and baths to humanity. The Japanese, as a result of their love of water-bathing and sun-bathing, are a healthy, happy people. I have seen bodies burnt bronze by the sun at the Lido and in other parts of Italy and Austria, and I found by the great lake near Budapest, where hundreds of families lie picnicking in the water for hours under the warm rays, a revelation of what sunshine could do for human nature. One of the most beautiful sights in the world is the

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“ School of the Sun ” at Leysin, Switzerland ; and if mothers could see the effect of the Alpine sun on the little child patients at Leysin, they would become enthusiastic devotees of the sun cure at home. The children go to school in the open air for two hours daily. They rest two hours in the afternoon, and during the remaining hours of the day they play and dance, they study Nature and practise Swedish drill, all the time their skins being exposed to air and light, for they are clad simply in a loin-cloth, shoes, and shady hats. Here you will see children who have always been “ delicate ”, who could not recover after infectious ailments, who were suffering from tubercular bones or lungs, blossoming like flowers in the sunshine, having become vigorous and robust, filled with joy and life and laughter. When I talked to the children at Leysin I agreed with Dr. Rollier that the psychological effect was one of the beautiful things about the sunlight cure. The children were happy and smiling, and rosy and plump with their sun- and air-bath treatments. I advise every mother in England to copy the hats worn in Leysin for

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summer wear in this country. These are of linen, ventilated and wide brimmed, so that the eyes and the upper part of the spine are well protected.

In advocating sun treatment in every home we must sound a note of warning. Children can have too much sun: they may show such symptoms of overdosing as pallor, fever, headache, and sickness. Dr. Rollier begins very gradually. He gives perhaps two to three minutes' treatment to the feet on the first day; next day the legs are exposed for the same time, and then the arms, the body later; and every day a little longer time is given until the child can be for three hours practically naked in the morning sun. The hot midday sun is not so safe as the early morning sunshine, and the same is true in England. Begin with small doses, and as the child pigments, gradually increase your doses. If possible combine the sun-bath with sea-bathing.

What actually does the sun do to the human body? Very important is the action of the chemical or ultra-violet rays on the blood.

What are these ultra-violet rays? White

light can be broken up into a spectrum of colour, as Newton proved by boring a hole in a closed shutter and passing a ray of light through a prism. The light is broken up into many colours. At one end the red rays are seen, and at the other blue and violet, whilst in between we have the orange, yellow, and green : these blended make white " light ". Beyond the red rays are infra-red rays or heat rays, and the " wireless " rays used for broadcasting over the world. Beyond the violet are ultra-violet or chemical rays, which can produce changes on sensitive or photographic plates. Still further beyond the violet are the Röntgen or X-rays. The composition of the sun's rays differs according to the purity of the atmosphere and the altitude of the particular part of the world we happen to live in. The wonderful and curative, invisible ultra-violet rays can be filtered out by smoke and dust and moisture. Human beings deprived of ultra-violet rays become pale, sickly, anæmic, depressed and depressing.

Sunlight increases the phosphorus, the calcium (lime), and the iron in the blood. We have more of these valuable minerals in our

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blood in spring and summer than during the sunless months of the year, and we are also more resistant to disease at that season of the year. Anæmic, rickety, or tubercular children benefit miraculously from sunlight, either natural or artificial sunlight, given in the right dosage. Remember that it is the invisible rays of the sun that are valuable, and that these are cut off by cloud and smoke, by curtains, and even by window-panes. The nursery of the future will have large sliding windows which can be wide open along the whole wall space to admit the sunlight and air; and wherever there is a balcony, a flat roof, or a bit of garden, let the sunlight treatment be begun at once in the open air.

The sunlight acts upon the skin by producing a *reaction* or reddening, which should become brown as the pigment gets deposited. At the same time the blood is brought to the surface through the tissues and organs, producing what we might call a "cellular massage". The effect of the ultra-violet rays of sunlight on the skin, is to raise the bactericidal (germ-destroying) power of the

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blood. The reason why we civilized men, women, and children are subject to chronic infections (stiff joints, boils and skin eruptions, septic teeth, etc.) is that we are cutting off the healing sunlight by our domestic smoke nuisance and the manner in which we eat and sleep in houses, the vast majority of which are unhygienic because of the absence of light.

Apart from the power which the ultra-violet rays have of killing harmful germs within and without the body, sunlight affects the mind through bodily processes. A bright, sunny day raises the spirits and cheers the minds of nearly every one. There is a feeling of hope and elation when the sun shines ; sunlight dissipates depression. In any year when there is less than a certain amount of sunlight, the health of the community suffers from various reasons. Vegetation depends on sunlight, and the vitamins in our green food and in the milk are diminished in the absence of sun, with disastrous effects on the children. We know that milk is very inferior in winter, when the cows are fed not on green stuff, but on artificial "cakes" and hay and

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mangel-wurzels. In winter also the cows are kept away from the light for many hours in badly constructed sheds, so that tuberculosis is encouraged and passed on in infected cow's milk to the children. If we could feed the cows as well as our children on green food, if we could do away with the smoke which prevents the sun's rays reaching our homes, we should reduce rickets and tuberculosis by fifty per cent. in five years. Other countries, notably America, are dealing with the smoke problem. The housewives and mothers of England one day will form a great National Association to demand clean air, sunlight, and clean food. We know that the Alpine sun can do what sun in Britain cannot; but Sir Henry Gauvain has proved that sunlight is the best of all agents, even in our low altitude, for treating delicate children, especially children suffering from rickets and tuberculosis.

Rickets is a "deficiency disease" due to lack of vitamins and lack of sunlight. Vitamins, as has been said in Chapter VI, are substances the chemical composition of which we do not yet know, found in fresh

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food, especially in farm and garden produce. By experiment it has been found that even if a diet deficient in vitamins is given to children or to animals, so long as ample sunlight is secured we can prevent rickets. Newly born rats were fed on a diet of poor vitamin content, such a diet as would inevitably be followed by rickets, and at the same time they were treated with artificial sunlight (ultra-violet radiation) for a few minutes every day, with the result that they grew normally and healthily, and showed not a sign of rickets. It appears that ultra-violet rays help the body to utilize its own vitamins, or it may be that with the tonic sunlight fewer vitamins are essential to health.

It is found that gradual pigmentation of the skin follows repeated exposures. Fair people react more quickly, more violently, to artificial sunlight than do dark, and red-haired people are especially susceptible, so far as my experience goes. The people who do not pigment at all are not likely to get much benefit from treatment by artificial sunlight; and mere freckling is not of much value from the healing point of view. At

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the time of exposure to artificial sunlight, nothing is felt ; but in a few hours an erythema or reddening is seen, which may last four, six, or even eight days, and this is followed by scaling or peeling. Later, pigmentation results, owing to the stimulation of pigment cells in the skin. Artificial sunlight will no doubt prove of great service to people who live in such a climate as ours in maintaining health and vigour during the winter months. This artificial sunlight treatment should of course be controlled by medical experts, but mothers can do a great service to the community, as well as to the health of their own children, if they will study the subject of Health and Light.

When I was a medical inspector of schools, I found about seventy-five per cent. of the children were suffering from rickets. Many of these lived in small dark cottages in mining districts ; nearly all were underfed, with diet deficient in the vitamin found in fresh fats (butter, dripping, fat of meat, etc.), which is so valuable in preventing rickets. In the well-to-do classes I believe that one in every three children has some degree of

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rickets due to two causes: that children are fed on an excess of starchy foods, and that they are starved of sunshine.

I must impress on all mothers, nurses, and teachers the necessity for increasing the time children live in sunshine or sky-shine when they are at work or play. Here are a few practical suggestions. Do not send your children of the nursery age to a school where lessons are given in damp, ill ventilated, and sunless rooms. Suggest to the head mistress that lessons might be given out-of-doors or on a verandah built for the purpose. If you cannot find a hygiene-loving, sunlight-loving head mistress, organize lessons in the sun at home. A little bit of garden or a roof garden will serve the purpose. Amongst a dozen of your friends you will surely find one who would provide an out-of-door schoolroom every morning, while the remaining mothers might pay a teacher who combined sufficient training with love and psychological knowledge of children. Such a woman would teach writing and arithmetic, geography and history on modern lines which compel a child's interest and satisfy

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his imagination ; and she would realize that community singing and eurhythmics are an essential part of any curriculum. Secondly, see that your children live in a home where the sun and air are welcome. Meals in a garden or at an open window should be the rule. If you are at the seaside or in the country, begin sunbaths : but remember what has been said about exposing the body gradually, as advised by the greatest authority on sunlight treatment, Dr. Rollier of Leysin. Let the child run about in "shorts", with the legs, arms, and upper part of the body exposed to air and light. A wide-brimmed hat will protect the eyes and upper part of the spine. Encourage paddling, sea- and river-bathing ; let the children live in a state of nature as much as possible. Even if you cannot take the children away for a holiday, even if you have to stay in a big town all through the summer and autumn, begin the sunlight cure all the same. There are great parks in cities where you can spend several hours daily, carrying with you a midday meal of fruit, salad, wholemeal bread, butter, and milk.

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Try to arrange the rooms in your house in such a way that you will get the maximum of sunlight into the house. Bedrooms, rooms used in the morning for breakfast, etc. should face east, as everybody knows that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. The living rooms should face west and south, whilst the dining-room and kitchen and offices can have a north exposure. Whenever possible we should demand from architects verandahs and sun-parlours such as are to be seen in America and in Germany. The Germans prefer windows which are large and wide and are made to open door-fashion, so as to admit the maximum of sun and air to the house. When house-hunting in cities, women should choose, whenever possible, low buildings and wide streets; and a home near an open space or park is infinitely preferable to another, where the neighbourhood is less open, though more fashionable. Let the sun pour through the windows: remember that the sun is the great healer, and that the more sunlight we allow into our homes, the healthier and happier life will become for the children.

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The skin of every one of us is an important "organ", as well as a covering or integument of the body. There are millions of living cells under the outer epidermis, where also are marvellous net-works of blood-vessels and nerves. The sun and the air in contact with the skin raise the vitality and tone of the body, and, consequently, of the mind. This tonic effect is achieved partly by improving the blood through the production of more and more healthy red and white corpuscles, and partly by initiating widespread reflex actions of a tonic order.

The air, sun, and wind had a chance of stimulating our ancestors before the word "civilization" was coined, before clothing was invented. Nowadays we overclothe, over-feed, under-exercise; and we are afraid of fresh air. Our great-grandchildren will have, every one of them, sun-bathing and air-bathing every day of their lives. Perhaps an enterprising head master of a big school will set the fashion; perhaps some doctor twenty years hence will stimulate the imagination of the masses towards the realization of the truth that air and air and more air

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breathed into human lungs, that sunshine and skyshine in abundance, are the only tonics worth having.

Open the windows all day and all night, except in foggy weather. Window glass not only keeps out the air, it cuts off the ultra-violet rays of the sun, these chemical or actinic rays which have such a beneficial influence on the blood and nervous system. It may take fifty years to make people realize that very little clothing will enable human beings to keep warm and keep healthy at the same time if from the earliest years they are accustomed to fresh air and sunlight.

CHAPTER VIII

BOYS AND GAMES

GAMES may be looked upon as the first practical application of the fundamental rules of good character which are taught in the nursery. Exercise of course is a necessary and desirable factor in the physical development of all children, and this usually begins in the form of walks ; but when the eighth and ninth birthdays are looming near, every small boy evinces a desire to play some game or other—probably cricket or football. There is some inherited instinct—especially marked in the British race—which impels all boys to play with a ball, or in fact anything that will roll, an instinct which has been handed down through many generations. Games are a preparation for life.

If the boy shows an inclination for any particular game, that is the one which he

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should be encouraged to play. At school he will have to follow the curriculum, and, like every one else, take his part in whatever is going on. School systems cater for the majority, and incidentally do so very well. Once amidst the school environment, it is surprising how soon boys fall into line with their new interests and new companions.

At his first school, a boy is initiated into the great game of kicking a football into a goal; no longer is it the old tennis ball that has to be directed between the chestnut tree and the wall in the back-garden. He has definitely reached the first rung on the ladder, and *confidence in himself* should emerge. Following upon this newly discovered confidence, a desire of self display will soon come into evidence; and immediately the small boy of nine or ten is possessed with the desire to show off his abilities to the other boys. They are not impressed—gradually it dawns upon him that perhaps, after all, his friends are as good as he is, and that it “pays” to be more unassuming; consequently he begins to take his place amongst his school-fellows, mediocre yet con-

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scious of it, and always trying to do his best. Step by step his desire for self-display recedes, and enjoyment of the game becomes the chief factor ; thus *modesty* emerges, and the seeds are sown for further psychological development.

The boy, having reached this stage, and passed under the spell of football (an exceedingly strong attraction), gradually improves sufficiently to play for a team. Soon he will be taught the two greatest lessons of games, especially football, unselfishness and team-work. A boy learns that if he attempts to enhance his own reputation in a match, by playing on his own initiative entirely, the result is absolutely contrary to his expectations ; and his popularity amongst his friends—a very important factor in the opinion of every boy—is soon on the wane. As his knowledge of the game improves, so he perceives that matches are never won by individual deeds, but by the concentrated efforts of the whole side, playing for and with each other ; and so a naturally selfish player tends by degrees to change his methods so that yet another lesson has been learned.

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From this sequence of events develops in due course a boy's realization of a place in "a side"—that he has to play in conjunction with his neighbours to the same end, and when necessary, has to forgo, for the sake of his side, all personal glory. If he thinks that the man near him has a better chance of scoring the winning goal, and so achieving the object of the game, he has to allow him to do it. Such lessons are more easily taught on the field of play than in the nurseries and schoolrooms, for in the latter environments it is often necessary to instil them by reproving, while such games as football tend to their development of their own accord, on much more satisfactory lines; and furthermore the lesson is a permanent one, which is not likely to be forgotten when "No Side" is sounded on the whistle.

What has been said of football applies to most, perhaps we might say to all, games: but this one illustrates to the full the value of games in character development. Rugby football carries, in its train, control of temper, the ability to take hard knocks with a smiling face, and to play cleanly and fairly. A boy

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learns that "hard play" and "rough play" are two entirely different things, and that cheating or fouling is one of the things that is not done. Courage and resource are demanded, together with team-work and unselfishness. Quickness to take or make an opening in the opponents' defence, and ability to make the most of an opportunity, are factors which are of inestimable value in later life. The boy is taught and is teaching himself these lessons in his play; is it likely that he will fail to apply them, when the need comes, in his work?

Cricket calls for endurance in the field under a hot sun, patience and stealth to score runs off a clever bowler, and the need of rising to a special occasion to help the side out of a difficulty.

Long "runs", so popular in many of our larger schools, are in many cases too great a strain on boys, especially if there is the slightest heart weakness, but they ensure a considerable amount of training, abstinence from unnecessary sweets, regular meals, and a good physical condition generally. Furthermore they are a fine test of stamina and

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endurance, and bring out the "will to win".

Of how many of us can it be said that we win modestly, and that we lose with a smile? There is but one school in the world where this most desirable quality of character may be learned, the school of sport. Neither parent nor teacher, neither sermon nor advice, will help boys to acquire it. Yet they learn it by the example of older friends; and it becomes a habit drawn from the natural environment of playing-field and pavilion, gradually moulding itself into the sporting spirit: the ability to "go down smiling" is one which we like to believe that we possess.

Games suggest excellent ideas, and the players themselves carry them into practice. They improve the material of which the boy is made, and quite apart from the beneficial effect they may have on his health of body, they have a very great influence upon the health of his mind. Is it not a significant fact that one of the greatest reproofs one can give to a boy is to tell him that in a certain action, he is not "playing the game"? The standards of the game are high, yet

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everybody will expect himself and his friend to live up to them. What mother would not feel proud of a son of whom she could say he is modest, unselfish, fair and honest ; that he does not mind losing a game ; that he does not lose his temper, and that he is very quick to accept a chance. And the essence of every one of these statements is being inculcated into boys from the moment they step into the playing field ; so much so, that it eventually becomes a natural part of themselves.

Quite apart from the actual aspects of the games themselves, there is another factor which will play a great part in a boy's character as he reaches maturity. During the later years of his school life, he begins to realize that there is a wonderful and strange camaraderie existing amongst the friends he makes. They all have an indefinable "something" in common, held together by their mutual understanding of the laws of "The Game". A boy comes to have confidence in his friends ; he knows that he can rely on them, and that they in turn trust him. There does exist that strange "something" which draws

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men together in all odd corners of the earth—a man who can talk of golf, or of cricket, or of football, will find a friend somewhere near, wherever he is.

Most strongly would I advocate, wherever possible, the small boy's initiation, under favourable conditions, into all types of games ; for first of all his character will be developed along suitable and healthy lines ; and, secondly, he eventually awakens to manhood and finds himself one of a vast company ready to play the great game of " Life ".

True credit is never given to our " recreations " for the good they have instilled into us in early youth, and the lessons they have taught ; but all boys who have been schooled in this atmosphere, gain untold wealth of mind and character by having joined that great freemasonry of sport, whose demand is " Unselfishness " and whose slogan is " Play the game ". It is not so much that a boy directly and consciously learns from games the ideals that are to be of value in the moulding of his character, as it is that the knowledge is instilled into him without

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his perceiving it ; and such knowledge, when once gained, is permanent, and a foundation upon which character-building may be continued.

CHAPTER IX

ADOLESCENCE

IT has been said with considerable truth that the child, as he grows from babyhood to adolescence, passes through every stage in the development of the human race from primitive man to the complex civilized individual of the twentieth century.

The young child, like our savage ancestors, knows nothing of reason, morality, religion, love. He shows many savage instincts and desires, and revels in fighting, hunting, truancy, mischief, and even cruelty. But at puberty, the beginning of adolescence, the period when the boy and girl leave childhood behind and become young men and women, there is a remarkable change.

There is a bodily alteration which shows itself in the development of a gentle maturity in the form, in the rapid growth of bone and

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muscle, in increased beauty, and in the change of voice and expression.

There is a mental change also, due to the rapid development of the brain, and in the years between fifteen and eighteen there is a great capacity for concentrated mental effort and hard brain work. The psychical changes are as evident and far-reaching. The higher human traits appear. This is the period of new birth of the highest faculties of the human soul, of the growth of social ideals, the age when religion and altruism emerge. There are physical and physiological changes which affect character and mental life.

At about puberty, thirteen to fifteen years, the ductless or endocrine glands exert a marked influence on development.

The Thyroid gland in the neck, about the level of "Adam's Apple", when active and in full function, makes the individual life speed up, so that a girl or boy thinks and feels and acts quickly. When children are deficient in the secretion of the thyroid, they are lazy, slow in speech and thought and movement, and their development is retarded.

The Pituitary gland, situated at the base of

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the brain, also exerts its mysterious influence. The child who grows rapidly after puberty has a healthy pituitary. Excess of pituitary secretion produces a giant; deficiency, a dwarf. Other glands such as the adrenals, situated on the kidneys, affect strength and virility; and one can imagine how disease of any one of these ductless glands will mar growth and character at the beginning of manhood and womanhood.

Physical health, especially in adolescence, has a vital bearing upon character. Septic teeth, by absorption of poisons into the blood, will produce disease of the thyroid gland, and so upset the proper "balance" in adolescence.

Anæmia, by impoverishing the brain, will make for lassitude, laziness, and sedentary ways.

So many children are handicapped in health and energy by impoverished blood, that it is worth while giving some consideration to the question. Anæmia is far too common, and it is a preventable ailment. The pallor and lassitude are typical. The remedy, in the shape of pills containing salts of iron, is of far less importance than finding out why girls and

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boys are anæmic. Anæmia is very serious in that it predisposes to tuberculosis and certain other diseases. It is too lightly regarded, and so it is allowed to sap the vitality in the precious years of youth. The blood is a fluid containing "corpuscles". The white corpuscles are the scavengers of the body, destroying germs which manage to gain entry. The red corpuscles carry the oxygen from the lungs to all the organs and tissues. In anæmia the red blood-cells are fewer and frailer, and carry less of the red pigment which unites with oxygen, so that the blood fails as an oxygen-carrier, and such chemical constituents as calcium, phosphorus, and iron are also diminished.

Experiments are being made in many countries as to the influence of light on the blood, and remarkable disclosures have resulted. It is found that after exposure of the body either to artificial light or to sunlight the blood is enriched in its chemical constituents; the cells are increased in number, and the power of the blood to kill germs is markedly increased. Now anæmia is in part a disease caused by insufficient light. If children were brought up to

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have regular sunlight baths, to wear less clothing, and to eat more natural food, we should, to a very large extent, do away with rickets, anæmia, and tuberculosis. Preventive medicine is therefore as much the concern of the mothers of the country as of the doctors.

Anæmia is in a sense a "deficiency disease"; and the main factors which favour it are deficient fresh air and light, deficient vitamins in the food, deficient exercise of mind and body. The anæmic girl is nearly always listless, depressed, and disinclined for exertion. These signs are unnatural in youth, when there should be an abundance of activity and energy. The whole problem of the prevention of anæmia is linked up with our understanding of endocrinology, of the function of the internal secretory glands. We know that the actinic or chemical rays of light, whether derived from sunlight or from tungsten, carbon, or mercury-vapour lamps, stimulate the action of these glands, perhaps through the bloodstream.

Mothers will therefore realize that the prevention of anæmia is largely in their hands, for air and sun purify and enrich the blood

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far better than medicines. In any case of marked anæmia and lethargy, the family doctor should be consulted, for neglected anæmia will have serious consequences, and may handicap your child and diminish considerably her health, her power of doing good work, and her happiness in the future.

Every boy and girl must have exercise in abundance.

Ideal "balance" is never very easy to attain in life, especially when we are dealing with the young. Mind and body trained in due proportion is our aim, without that excess which makes for impaired health in after-life.

There are people who decry modern athletics for girls because they say the girl's feminine qualities, and especially her worth as a future mother, are diminished. Physical overstrain is undoubtedly bad for girls; and it is true that the somewhat strenuous school games and sports combined with the intellectual study girls must go through, are sometimes harmful, at least to the less robust types.

Girls, as well as boys, require regular, moderate exercise in the fresh air if they are

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to keep their health. School games are excellent so long as they are played judiciously, and do not entail mental and physical exhaustion. The great risk is that schoolgirls' athletics, by causing further fatigue when the girls are tired out with study, worn out with the strain of concentrating their attention on one lesson after another, may do considerable damage.

It is a physiological fact that excessive mental and physical strain means loss of vitality. If the nervous energy is used up in girlhood, nervous breakdown may be the penalty in after-life. The higher the type of girl, the more she will try to accomplish mentally and physically what is expected of her. When the brilliant student suddenly breaks down for no apparent reason, in nine cases out of ten the cause, if it is not psychological, is too much athleticism and over-pressure at school combined.

One of the most popular games—hockey—, if played too often and too strenuously, is unsuitable for growing girls. For one thing, it entails violent exercise on two days a week when girls are exhausted with brain work.

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Any exercise that is to be beneficial must be obtained regularly, without excessive strain or fatigue. The people who advocate enthusiastically games and sport and physical culture for the schoolgirl, are evidently unaware that physical culture in excess is an especial danger to girls during the years of rapid growth.

Like most good things, physical culture can be overdone, and there is a widespread tendency to encourage excessive physical as well as mental strain at school. Let girls play games outdoors and enjoy physical exercise in the gymnasium by all means ; but let them guard against anything in the shape of excess. Dyspepsia and headaches at school, " nerves ", and habit-spasms are just as often the result of excessive physical strain as they are of too severe study. Children should *enjoy* both games and lessons.

One of the most interesting developments of the last ten or twenty years is the new attitude towards education. The old idea of compelling children to learn a multitude of facts is giving way to the realization that education is only worthy of the name if it succeeds in satisfying the child's urge for self-expression.

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The new ideal is the development of intelligence and character, so that the child is helped to adjust himself to his social relationships, and to live happily and usefully among his fellows.

The school of the future will be a great workshop and art studio combined ; there will be nothing like our present system of classes with a bored teacher "instructing" bored pupils. We are beginning to realize that education is a science which entails careful analysis of a child's mind by mental tests associated with the analytical recording of physical, mental, and psychological progress. The subjects studied must be brought into vital relationship with the child's experiences ; and community of spirit must be encouraged by creative and group activities.

In a few schools in England and in America new methods are proving very successful. It is widely recognized that a child will learn easily and happily when interested ; and so the play-interest is utilized in the schools. Under the Project method, school subjects are considered to be interdependent, and education proceeds whilst the child works at what interests him. Any subject may be chosen as a Project,

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for example, a journey round the world. For a whole term the children live as realistically as possible the life of travelling. They make model ships and paint pictures of the countries they visit in imagination. They study books and illustrations dealing with their Project. They draw an immense map on the classroom floor, and stock their ships with merchandise which they sell at various ports from which they bring new cargoes. They write descriptive letters about the countries and people they visit. All the time they are learning the usual school subjects, reading, writing, arithmetic ; but they are learning also to be articulate. They give three- or four-minute speeches about the work they are doing, they choose special subjects for study, they have dramatic performances in costumes which they themselves make, so that they learn elocution, history, arts and crafts. They study music, not as a subject apart, but in association with their Project. Native songs and dances are practised ; the legends and myths of the different countries all add to the store of valuable information they acquire. In such ways the child has opportunities for self-expression, so

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that there is less chance of the repressions and suppressions which victimized children under the old system. In some schools, the Project idea is associated with individual work by means of practise books and tests. The child is given books on such subjects as arithmetic, history, geography, which are self-instructive, so that a minimum of help is required from the teacher. The child learns step by step, and he can test himself by means of answer sheets. Certain final tests are given by the teacher ; and the general opinion is that the children progress more rapidly than under the old system, and that time is saved that can be devoted to the group interests. The children in a group may produce a Greek play or issue a newspaper. As they work under the self-government system, the old-fashioned discipline from without is not required ; and the children play, i.e., work, in a happy community of interest. The school of the future will cultivate the love of painting, sculpture, literature and poetry, which is latent in the soul of all intelligent human beings, but which education of the old type tended to repress. Work which is evaded and disliked by eighty per

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cent. of adults and of children alike, will become a joy in the future. Children and parents and teachers working in co-operation will share in a happy adventure, and life will become more beautiful and more valuable.

CHAPTER X

ADOLESCENCE (*continued*)

THE wise parent realizes, first, the importance of good health in adolescence and its bearing upon moral and mental qualities.

Secondly, the adolescent has certain characteristics. He—or she—is suggestible and yet resents authority. So that more can be accomplished by *indirect* suggestion and very little by direct commands, by trying to impose your own views about life and conduct on your girls and boys.

This is the age when we cannot force, but we can help boys and girls to adjust themselves to life.

So much of life's happiness and success depends upon good management in adolescence that parents and teachers—indeed, everybody concerned with youth—should make a special study of this period. At puberty the boy changes

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to the man, girlhood passes into womanhood, and a period of what is almost physiological chaos supervenes. The "good", quiet, orderly boy alarms his guardian by wilfulness or wildness; the girl who has been almost perfect in her attitude to parent and teacher becomes "difficult", and is often what despairing guardians call "impossible" to manage.

Mysterious changes are taking place in the body and in the mind also, as adolescence is the period of new desires and new aspirations, both intellectual and spiritual. It is at puberty that the internal secretory (endocrine) glands become more active, when they pour into the blood-stream chemical substances which affect the health and character of the individual. The lazy adolescent, slow in speech and sluggish in mentality, may be deficient in the secretion of the thyroid gland, just as the boy or girl who remains of poor stature and infantile in physique, is usually the victim of inadequate development of the pituitary gland. We know that in adolescence these glands may in some instances develop unequally. It takes some years to establish "balance"; the boy, so "difficult" from the parental point of view,

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is often the victim of body instability over which he has no control.

A great deal of course depends on the parents. Environment is a force of such terrible significance that parentage is a most acute responsibility for the intelligent. A wrong environment in the nursery can manufacture psychoneurotics by the thousand. Unintelligent and undisciplined environment in adolescence fills our asylums, prisons, and nursing-homes with those who, under different conditions of life, would have been useful and happy members of the herd.

In dealing with adolescence it is necessary to be fair, sympathetic, non-sentimental, practical, understanding in our attitude. This, admittedly, is not very easy. But in "education" the training of mind and body in due proportion must be our aim, without excess in either direction, because that may lead to a nervous breakdown, or to various physical ills (such as overstrained heart), when physical culture is carried to excess. If nervous energy is used up too freely in the 'teens, permanent damage to health invariably results.

In adolescence the health is often in jeopardy

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for a time, so that headaches, anæmia, and digestive disorders are common in youth. Spinal curvature is very common; it is due to general lack of tone of the muscles and to anæmia, to careless posture, and to bad positions of the body, for example, over school desks. Mothers should notice carefully the children's backs at regular intervals. By drawing the fingers sharply down the spinal processes of the back, a red line is made in the skin; and it can be seen whether the backbone is straight or not. If there is any curvature, either to one side or other or backwards, showing undue prominence of several vertebrae, consult your doctor, who will advise you about massage and exercises. The little patient should be taught to make movements which tend to correct the deformity—for instance, stepping forwards and outwards whilst lifting the hand and arm of the same side above the head, according to whether the curvature is corrected by right- or left-sided movement. Another excellent exercise is to lie flat on the back and lift the legs upwards at right angles to the body. The diaphragm should receive special attention. Abdominal breathing should

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never be restricted by tight clothing. Let children practise exercises for the diaphragm. Place your hand over the child's chest, and while he breathes deeply, tell him to try to move the abdomen, but to move the chest as little as possible. This is a splendid exercise to correct constipation, for it massages all the internal organs and improves the general muscular tone which is defective in curvature of the spine.

When the spine is curved, there is a tendency to flat feet. Here also is lack of tone in the muscles and ligaments. The child should practise tip-toe exercises, skipping and crawling exercises, which are excellent for the spine, walking exercises with a book balanced on the head and breathing deeply all the time. Never neglect spinal curvature or round shoulders. Health depends very much on good chest development. Between eight and eighteen years every care should be taken as it will make all the difference to health and carriage in after-life.

Tuberculosis (consumption) of the lungs more frequently develops in adolescence than at any later age. If early signs of this disease

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were recognized and dealt with, tens of thousands of valuable young lives would be saved every year. Lassitude, loss of weight, slight cough, and sweating at night comprise a group of signs and symptoms which should never be lightly regarded. The boy or girl in such a case should be taken to the family physician. Food and physical culture are very important. Diet should be nourishing, sufficient, but never excessive. Three good well-cooked meals a day, with fruit and vegetables in abundance, would make "tuck-boxes" and "tuck-shops" superfluous.

The crying need of British boarding-schools is better cooking. In over seventy per cent. of our public schools, the food is monotonous, badly cooked, and unsatisfying, so that the health of the children suffers. Better food and the better cooking of it for young people from thirteen to eighteen years of age, both in the home and in the schools, would help more than anything else to prevent ill health in adolescence.

Some measure of discipline with regard to feeding, as with everything else, is necessary where children are concerned. But if I had

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charge of the housewifery, whether in a house with boys and girls attending day schools and having meals at home, or in a boarding-school where scores of children are fed at once, I would try the following plan. I would supply good perfectly cooked food in two courses with fruit for the chief meal of the day : for example, rich vegetable soup followed by meat or fish or eggs, with perfectly steamed vegetables enriched with butter after the French fashion, and fruits in their season. Or we could give a meat or fish course followed by pudding or sweets that children like, for instance, fruit tarts, inexpensive trifle, stewed fruits, or light boiled suet puddings served with treacle, syrup, or honey. I would allow the children to help themselves to the quantity they desired, and I would allow a child to refuse any dish and take instead wholemeal bread and butter, with dripping, or cheese.

If certain dishes are constantly refused by a few dozen children at a school meal, it seems sheer stupidity to continue to serve them. A small boy told me one day that at his school the children are not required to eat what they do not want. " We had a pudding the other

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day," he said, " and only three out of nineteen at the high table took a helping." And still that pudding will be served once a week. Where is the real economy ? I suggested that if the school caterer bought fruit, oranges, plums, and apples in large quantities direct from the market, when it was cheap, the boys who wished might have fruit instead of pudding every day. " That would not be school, it would be Paradise ! " said the small boy, sighing deeply and grinning broadly. Why not give boys and girls a taste of heaven on earth at the expense of a dish of apples, bananas, and oranges at meal-times ?

With regard to physical culture at the school age it should ensure :—(1) deep breathing ; (2) good posture, so that slouching, round shoulders, and spinal curvatures are prevented ; and (3) joy in athletics and encouragement of the play spirit.

I do not think any sensible person would deny that girls should play games, take an interest in sport, and try to excel in tennis, golf, even football, if such active exercise appeals to them. It is quite true that there is danger in excess of sport, as there is danger

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in excess of anything, even good works. It is quite a useful platitude to assert that moderation is desirable in tennis or hockey or any other sport. Many people are interested in the question as to whether sports make more exacting demands on girls than on boys, whether they are too big a strain on the physical and nervous resources of girls. "It all depends" is the best reply to questions on these points. It depends on whether games are strenuously and constantly played day after day, with frequent tournaments and trials of strength. It depends also upon the physique of the players. Some girls are like live wires ; nothing tires them ; they revel in strain, and expend energy cheerfully under the hottest suns and the most exacting conditions. Others again have a moderate amount of energy to spare, and they can come perilously near the danger line of over-fatigue. Finally there is a third group of girls whose devotion to games should be strictly limited in that they are far from robust for physiological reasons. They may be what is popularly called "anæmic" in that their blood is deficient in quality. They may have tuberculosis in their system

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or they may be improperly "balanced" in their endocrine functions. In all such cases, energy is insufficient for the call of heavy intellectual work and strenuous sport as well.

At the same time a great deal of nonsense is talked about the danger of sports for girls. Alarmists and cranks make wild statements about the national danger of girls' participation in sports. It is asserted that games jeopardize motherhood; but there is no evidence to support such an assertion. Other things being equal, the girl fond of games is more likely to have healthy children than the indoor sedentary, bookish type—anæmic and "delicate" in mind and body.

The advantage of games for boys is recognized, but the boy who over-exerts himself at games is over-drawing on his vitality, jeopardizing his future function of fatherhood, in exactly the same way as the girl who plays too often and too strenuously jeopardizes her capacity for motherhood. There is no medical objection to girls' playing games, and there is no logical objection on the ground that certain games are "unwomanly". We can remember when it was unwomanly to ride a bicycle,

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enter a profession, or suggest votes for the mothers and the women workers. Old ideas are in the melting pot, and we have come to the conclusion that it is not what girls do that matters, but how, when, and why they do it. Womanliness, like other qualities of heart and spirit, is an attitude of mind, and has very little to do with our mental and physical occupations.

There is going to be a very big change in what we call education. The children of the future will have a far better chance than we have ever known. Education was "stuffy" when I was a child, and it has made less progress in the last thirty years than it will make in the next ten. Schoolrooms in most cases were stuffy, literally stuffy, with windows open a couple of inches, with inferior ventilators, which under proper conditions should have been unnecessary, and with rows and rows of children bending over books and slates and papers, bored with what should be a delight. Hygienically there is not a very great improvement; mentally lessons are as stuffy as ever, and teachers who feel as bored as the children are too common among us. For at least half the

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year, lessons should be in the open air ; and lessons should be different. No wonder our children are "creeping like snails unwillingly to school" : it is because they are bored by school in eighty per cent. of cases. "Everybody hates lessons," so many children say. Everybody can learn all they want to know cheerfully and joyously. Teach every child first how to use his hands to make things and grow things and cook food that looks and tastes delicious. Every child should garden and grow crops, and look after animals, and dance, and dress up for pageantry. That bit of the curriculum might occupy one-third of the day ; then two foreign languages studied and spoken properly for half-an-hour each every day, would mean a useful working knowledge of the same in a year or two. History and literature could be taught in such a way that the child acquired gradually a love of good literature. Geography and science could be taught with the aid of the cinematograph. In teaching music, good gramophone records would be invaluable. The child should love every hour of his day, every subject he approaches. "I hate going back to school."

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How frequently one hears the phrase ! and one visualizes the backs bent over books, and " prep ", the cram system, the classics learned by " keys ", the memorizing of material which is of no practical or artistic value to anybody.

I should like to see an educational congress of parents and teachers and children. Intelligent boys and girls from the elementary, secondary, and public schools would have many interesting ideas to give us of ideal education. We are all too anxious to impart knowledge to the young ; our present system entails physical and mental strain, out of all proportion to the worth of the education derived.

No school nowadays should be built without verandahs, balconies, and flat roofs where classes can be held in the fresh air and sunshine, or without gardens and miniature farms, biological and astronomical laboratories, where nature can be studied in every aspect. How much more interesting life becomes when we get real education ! Education, in its highest sense, is adjustment to life ; and we are not adjusted unless we are mentally vital and vigorous, keen to know and to learn, appreciative of the beauty of life, tolerant, cheerful,

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courageous. That is the sort of education we must aim at for the children.

A generous outlook, charity of thought, desire for service, should be encouraged by parents and teachers of the young. At no period of their lives are boys and girls more susceptible to careful training than at school age, nor at any other period are they so ready to receive impressions which may have lasting results in their minds.

From the selfish to the unselfish, from self-love to altruism is the normal progress of the human soul ; and in adolescence we expect the flowering of artistic, romantic, and religious emotion. The final great adjustments of life—adjustment to sex, adjustment to infinity—must be made in adolescence.

CHAPTER XI

THE IMPORTANCE OF PREVENTION OF ILLNESS

THERE is a considerable percentage of sick people today who owe their ills and miseries to neglected nursery ailments. "He will grow out of it," says the unwise mother when somebody suggests that her boy has one shoulder higher than the other. Children do not grow out of neglected spinal curvature, alar scapulæ (sticking out shoulder blades), or legs bent by rickets. "It is only growing pains," is a senseless remark if a child's joints and muscles feel the ache of rheumatic infection. The small boy will never "grow out of" large, dirty, septic tonsils, any more than he will grow out of carious teeth. If the glands of his neck are enlarged like little beans under the fingers, do not comfort yourself at the expense of neglecting the child.

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Attend to any one of these conditions at once.

Nursery ailments should never be neglected. Any sign of spinal curvature or round back should be treated, else the spinal bones become involved and the defect becomes chronic and incurable. Proper exercises—swinging from a horizontal bar and crawling—are especially useful; deep breathing and even massage should be employed to strengthen the flabby muscles. See that the child sits straight and square on his chair and that he does not lounge over desks and tables. But do not “nag”; it is waste of energy and cruel also, for a child cannot keep his back straight until the weak muscles are toned up and made healthy. Slight lameness may be a sign of a serious condition—namely, tuberculosis in the hip joint. Rickets is responsible for so many physical deformities, including pigeon chest, sunken ribs, bow legs, and knock knees, that its early signs should not be left to be “grown out of”. Flabby muscles, protuberant abdomen, sweating on the scalp, and anæmia are present long before any bony changes are apparent.

The prevention of rheumatism is partly

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dependent on hygienic factors ; but more important even than these and the “ warm woollen underclothing ” so many doctors insist upon is the early detection of any septic focus, for example bad teeth or enlarged, unhealthy tonsils. After measles and scarlet fever any ear-discharge should be attended to at once ; “ rheumatism ” later may be the penalty of neglect. A child will never grow out of these suppurating ear-conditions, and they should always be treated seriously.

Mothers are much more alive these days to the importance of watching for signs of rheumatism in the nursery. They realize that “ growing pains ” are a sign of danger. It is never “ painful ” to grow physically, whatever pangs we may feel when we are “ growing up ” psychologically and spiritually. The child subject to sore throats and growing pains is a sufferer from rheumatism, and it is particularly important to guard against this dread disease in autumn, when cold winds and rain and damp become more and more prevalent. I want mothers to realize certain facts about rheumatism :—(a) It is the chief cause, almost the only cause, of heart disease in youth, and there

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are more deaths annually from heart disease than from either cancer or tuberculosis ; (b) rheumatism is not caused by damp, but it is more prevalent wherever there are damp houses, and improperly fed children who do not have sufficient fresh air and sunlight are specially liable to contract the disease ; (c) rheumatism is due to a germ or bacillus which enters the body through septic teeth or tonsils, for example, and every mother should realize the seriousness of mild attacks of tonsillitis ; (d) it is a mistake to think that rheumatic fever is necessarily associated with marked pain and swelling in joints. In young children there may only be indefinite signs of ill-health and "growing pains" to warn us that a child is on the way to contract incurable heart disease.

In preventing rheumatism, attention to clothing is important. A child should wear light woollen combinations summer and winter, and when chilly autumn evenings come in their season a warm woollen coat is a safeguard, even if a sensible jersey costume is the rule. There is a type of child prone to rheumatism. The rheumaticky child is waxy pale with red cheeks

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and is red haired. He is subject to digestive derangements, to asthma and headaches and anæmia. He is usually "nervy" and easily acquires habit-spasms and St. Vitus's Dance, which is always rheumatic in origin. Many doctors say that the child to whom rheumatism is a danger is mentally irritable, easily tired by work and games, and difficult to manage in school and at home; therefore these children require special care, extra rest and sleep, fresh air, sunlight, and, above all, good food. Excessive consumption of flesh food is one factor predisposing to rheumatism in this country, where two million people suffer the pain of chronic rheumatism, and this is an indication that we should be very careful not to overfeed children on flesh food. Pork, veal, goose, duck, hashes, and tinned meat are very undesirable meat dishes. A small helping daily of chicken, lean beef, mutton, pigeon, and rabbit are the most suitable forms of flesh food. Pickles and spices should never be given to children, and peas and beans are said to be undesirable where there is a tendency to rheumatism. Amongst good foods are green vegetables, celery, marrow, tomato, lettuce, sole,

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flounders, plaice, haddock, butter, fruits. The best nursery beverages for rheumatically children are water, milk, and cocoa.

The skin should be kept active by exercise and by a warm bath at bed-time and a cold or tepid sponge in the morning. Children subject to rheumatism should be encouraged to drink water between meals, as it helps the "elimination" of poisons from the body. It is most important to have any child with a tendency to sore throats and growing pains regularly inspected by the family physician, and septic tonsils should always be removed by a surgeon. Lastly, if a young person has suffered from an attack of rheumatism it is important to remember that the heart will be weak for some time. The child may require two months in bed; he will be unfit for hard work or school games for many months. Rest is essential if the patient is to escape permanent heart damage.

Enlarged glands in the neck may be due to diseased teeth and tonsils, or they may follow upon the infectious diseases. Unhealthy glands are likely spots for the germs of tubercle to settle in.

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Neglect of the teeth is one of the commonest causes of ill-health in the nursery. We know a little more of the cause and prevention of carious teeth nowadays.* We know that the calcium phosphate, an element of the enamel which should protect the tooth against caries, is attacked by chemical and bacterial substances. We know also that carbohydrate foods, especially sugar, make things easier for the germs, and that lack of thorough cleanliness encourages decay. We have heard a great deal lately of the calcium content of the bones and teeth. The blood stream contains a certain quantity of calcium phosphate, and if this is below the normal, the teeth and bones are drained of calcium and become more porous, softer, more easily attacked by germs. Soft white teeth, common in certain families, are due, it is said, to calcium deficiency, and this is associated sometimes with lack of vitamins in the food. The expectant mother, therefore, should have such foods as milk and vegetables, which have vitamins in abundance, and these, as has been said in the chapters on

¹ See the volume in this series, *The Teeth and Health*, by Dr. Sim Wallace.

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diet, should be liberally supplied to children at the nursery stage. Brown bread and fruits help to preserve the teeth, partly because they must be well chewed, and teeth will be healthier if we work them hard. Fruits also cleanse the mouth; the more acid fruits—oranges and lemons—stimulate the secretion of the cleansing saliva. These foods are rich in vitamins which help the assimilation of calcium and phosphorus.

The diet question seems therefore to be of first importance in teeth preservation. Every mother should attend to the following:—

1. Children require hard food which should be chewed thoroughly; crusts and toasted brown bread and “pull bread” are excellent breakfast foods.

2. Fruit should be eaten at least twice daily, preferably at the close of the meal; apples and oranges are preferable to bananas and stone fruits such as plums.

3. Green vegetables, such as spinach, brussels sprouts, cabbage, should be eaten once daily; salads, made of well-washed vegetables, including onions and tomatoes, are splendid foods for preserving the teeth.

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Cleanliness must be taught from the beginning. A curved tooth-brush with irregular bristles is much better than the old-fashioned straight brush. Each tooth should be cleaned separately, the back of the tooth receiving special attention. It is most important to watch the first teeth for any sign of decay ; carious milk-teeth must be stopped or extracted, to guard against the infection of the permanent teeth. When we remember that even one decayed root may cause infection of the blood-stream, and such diseases as rheumatism, the necessity for regular inspection of the teeth will be realized. This, to be thorough, calls for a regular X-ray examination. Prevention of dental caries is one of the most important factors in ensuring better health for the next generation.

Frequent colds in the head are a sign of ill-health which should never be neglected.

A " cold " is in one sense a disease of civilization ; although, when real civilization comes, it will have been exterminated from our midst. In these days it flourishes in cities and is passed from victim to victim in the home and in the world outside. Many people believe that

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children catch colds because they are exposed to draughts. Some people imagine that by making children wear many layers of thick underclothes they will escape. Others preach that "coddling" causes colds. It is true enough that coddling (wearing too many clothes) predisposes to disease, because it lowers the resistance of the body, but so does "hardening". One sees children being "hardened", walking with thin clothes and legs exposed to the weather, while the Spartan mother wears a fur coat.

We must remember that a "cold" is an infection like measles or diphtheria. It is often quite a serious disease; the probability is that doctors fifty years hence will know enough to eradicate it from this country as we have eradicated plague and cholera. Unfortunately it is a "mixed" infection, in the sense that half-a-dozen or more different germs are often equally to blame for the same attack of cold. Measles can be caused only by one microbe, so can typhoid, or diphtheria; but a "cold" may be due to many, including the pneumonia germ and the bacillus catarrhalis or germ of catarrh.

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The nose is the chief thing we have to consider if we wish to prevent colds. A healthy nose is inhospitable to germs; they will die on the threshold by the million. The nose is the organ of breathing; but half the population seem to be unaware of the fact, as they go through life with open mouths gaping for germs. An open mouth may be an indication of weak character and poor cerebral development. At the same time a physical deformity may account for a vacant expression. A "deflected septum" is what the nose and throat specialist calls a pushing to one side of the little partition between the two nostrils which ought to lie straight down the middle of the face. So one nostril very easily gets blocked, and the other has to do double work. The workless nostril, of course, deteriorates, just as the brains do if they are not worked steadily all the time. The microbes have their opportunity, and cold after cold makes life miserable for thousands of children all through the winter. It is useless for mothers and nurses to say, "Shut your mouth and breathe through your nose"; you might as well ask the poor child to breathe through the top of

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his head. The right course is to have any nasal obstruction put right and then teach the child how to breathe.

Shallow respiration not only predisposes to colds, it makes for narrow chests, round backs, sticking out shoulder-blades, and all sorts of chest ailments from bronchitis to consumption. Help the child to breathe by the nose, to breathe deeply, filling the lungs with fresh air. That is the first rule in preventing colds. Secondly, see that boys and girls wear sensible warm clothing, covering the chest and arms with light wool. One covering of wool, from knees to chest, is the rule, and take no heed of the people who sneer at "coddling".

A great danger in the past has been *excess* of clothing. I have seen children wearing seven or eight or even ten garments; but the modern mother, trained in hygiene, realizes that four articles of apparel (apart from shoes and stockings) suffice, viz. light woollen combinations, vest and knickers attached by buttons, a jersey; and in the case of girls, a skirt.

Excessive, heavy clothing causes fatigue and prevents moisture escaping from the skin; garments should be few, light, loose, and porous.

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The only medicine for preventing colds which can be recommended as safe, is a teaspoonful of common salt in a tumbler of warm water, for cleansing nose and throat of germs and fog and the sort of impurities picked up in tram and train and 'bus. "Cold", like other infections, is a case of seed and soil. Keep the soil, i.e. the tissues, resistant and healthy, and destroy the seed, the germs, by fresh air, by sun, by keeping infected persons isolated, by getting rid of fog, and by sensible measures directed against smoke in our cities.

Mothers of this generation are given opportunities to acquire knowledge of personal health and of hygiene through popular lectures ; and this is all to the good. We must do what we can to prevent disease and diminish ill-health by attending to minor ailments and to disease in its earliest stages. By parents', doctors', and teachers' working in co-operation, the health of the new generation will be immensely better than that of any previous one. The habit of good health can be cultivated, and health of mind and body is the basis of human happiness. The aim should be prevention of

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disease, especially infectious disease, amongst children.

It is no longer considered necessary for children to catch one infectious disease after another, with the false notion that it is better for them to get through the childish ailments as quickly as possible. Such an idea not so very long ago meant carelessness in isolating an infectious child in a large family, and allowing children with supposed "bad colds" (perhaps the first stage of measles) to attend parties and infect scores of others.

The modern mother, as well as the doctor, knows that the younger the child the more serious the illness, that a baby of three runs greater risks from measles than a lad of thirteen; and so every effort is made to keep infectious diseases out of the nursery. We know that bad teeth and septic tonsils make such illnesses as scarlet fever, influenza, and rheumatism more likely to occur.

But what is less known, perhaps, is the great need of the care of children after measles, scarlet fever, etc. Mothers should know that the poison or toxin of all infectious diseases is first of all a special danger to the heart. When

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a child is listless, lethargic, "lazy", after even a mild attack of scarlet fever or rheumatic fever, there is a definite physical cause and a very real danger if care is not exercised. A child is not fit for any hard mental work or for strenuous games for six months after measles, for twelve or eighteen months after diphtheria, the poison of which has a special action on the heart and nervous system.

Measles may be less serious than other infectious ailments in some respects, but its after-effects are never to be lightly regarded. It predisposes to that form of consumption (tuberculosis) which affects particularly the glands at the roots of the lungs. Whooping-cough also lowers the resistance of the lungs to consumption ; and fresh air in abundance, nourishing food, and a great deal of rest for some time after convalescence are wise precautions. Such signs as breathlessness and palpitation after convalescence from scarlet fever and rheumatic fever should always be reported to the doctor.

At the same time it is essential never to alarm a child about "heart disease". Thousands of hypochondriacs have been manufactured as a result of unwise discussion between

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doctor and parent in children's hearing concerning symptoms.

Between eight and eighteen years of age the heart is growing rapidly ; indeed, it doubles its size in those ten years. The heart-beat against the thin chest wall of childhood is very widespread and apparent, and nervous children are sometimes made far too conscious of their hearts by anxious mothers. Certain signs and symptoms, such as slight irregularity of the heart and " flutterings ", are often what doctors call " functional ", that is, there is no organic disease ; and to let a child feel that he is not fit for ordinary school life and school games has a bad effect on the nervous system.

While it is necessary to regulate and decrease work and play for a time after infectious illness, including influenza, the impression should be conveyed that this is a temporary measure to give the heart-muscle time to recover tone, and the brain reasonable rest and chance of recuperation.

Can the poison of an infectious disease alter character ?

The answer is that it frequently does.

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Mumps, for instance, may—fortunately rarely—injure certain internal secretory glands to such an extent that an ordinary masculine boy may appear after this illness effeminate, and lacking in the love of sport, etc. Some poisons even alter the intellectual power for the worse; and parents ought to understand that a child who has had meningitis or sleepy sickness, or even one of the commoner “childish” ailments, may suffer for years from the effects of the poison on the brain and spinal cord.

It is, of course, important not to let children know that we are anxious or fearful of their physical or mental health at any time. Cheerful optimism is the keynote of good suggestion in all matters relating to the health of the child.

CHAPTER XII

INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN CHILDHOOD

ALL infectious diseases are caused by micro-organisms, popularly termed "germs".

Many of these germs are to be found normally present in the body, lying dormant, when a person is in a state of perfect health. They are kept in submission by the body as long as a certain standard of health is maintained; but as soon as the bodily health deteriorates, these germs immediately become active, multiply, and bring about the symptoms of their particular disease—measles, diphtheria, or an attack of influenza. The mechanism of the body is now out of order, and we have the complete disease present. The germs inhabit the portions of the body which are particularly to their liking; and there they remain until careful nursing and the natural

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resistance of the body combine to subdue them.

The germs leave the body, through the patient's coughing or sneezing, or by the excreta, and are inhaled or swallowed by other people. Should the recipients be in a state of good health, they will suffer no inconvenience ; the germs will either be killed or else once more lie dormant to await a favourable opportunity. On the other hand, should that person be run down or otherwise incapacitated, the germs will flourish and so a second " case " arises and we have infection in full swing. Infection occurs in the body through many channels. Milk is often the carrier of germs of consumption, diphtheria and typhoid ; the fact is a black mark against the present stage of our civilization. Typhoid is more frequently contracted from contaminated water. The tubercle bacillus, the cause of consumption, is found in dust and in the air we breathe, due in this case to the dried expectoration of consumptives. Germs causing tetanus and suppuration gain entry through cuts and abrasions in the skin : in all cases of such damage, prompt cleansing and

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sterilizing treatment with tincture of iodine should be carried out. The stages through which a patient who has contracted an infectious disease passes may be divided into four.

1. The period of incubation during which the germs are multiplying ; it is the period between exposure to infection and the first signs of the disease. A child may show lassitude and loss of energy, and is said to be "sickening for" the ailment he has contracted.

2. The period of fever. The germs have now obtained sufficient advantage to make their presence felt, and such symptoms as headache, vomiting, loss of appetite appear. At this stage also there is usually a rash.

3. The stage of decline of the fever, when the body is once more obtaining the upper hand. The crisis is passed ; the symptoms decline ; and the temperature returns to normal.

4. The stage of convalescence. The importance of this period cannot be too strongly stressed. The body is recuperating and needs constant attention in the matter of nourishing diet, fresh air, sunshine, and such tonics as may be advised by the physician. Neglect

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after infectious disease is frequently followed by tuberculosis or consumption.

Consumption heads the list of death-rates in all civilized countries, and it is a constant menace to every child during the years of physical development. Though the results of this disease may not be evident until middle life, it is almost invariably contracted in childhood.

Many things predispose to the growth and development of the tubercle bacillus ; insufficiency of fresh air (a condition unhappily too often found) is a great factor in its favour. Good food and plenty of exercise help to prevent consumption ; over-strain and lack of sleep predispose to the disease.

Exercise, if vigorous, will develop the lungs and chest, and ensure an excellent defence ; physical training in a school curriculum should be encouraged.

The digestive tract must be treated with care and consideration, and constant supervision of the teeth should be insisted upon by all parents. The root of many primary infections in later life can be traced back to the disregard of the teeth in early youth.

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Good food in plenty, with the avoidance of over-indulgence, is a matter at the discretion of individual parents, who should be perfectly capable of dealing with this in a satisfactory manner.

Measles is a disease which is apt to be accepted lightly. It is not generally known that measles has a high death-rate ; but many of the serious consequences can be avoided with the exercise of moderate care. Scarlet fever is popularly believed to be a much more serious disease ; yet statistics show that, compared with measles, it claims but half the number of fatal cases.

Bronchitis and consumption are the chief complications of measles, and these must be guarded against ; avoidance of chills in convalescence is a most important point. Another complication of this ailment is middle-ear disease : any sign of ear-trouble should be immediately reported to the doctor.

Scarlet fever, like many other " childish ailments ", is more dangerous in its after-effects than in the primary illness. The throat is always affected, and spraying and gargling are included in the necessary treatment. The

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skin, as is universally known, "peels"; and to prevent infection's spreading about the sick-room and thence to other people, systematic washing is recommended and a general application of some mild antiseptic such as carbolized vaseline.

As in measles, ear-trouble may ensue, and the patient must be safeguarded against chills. A chill at such a period predisposes to certain complaints, far-reaching in their effect in later life, and out of all proportion to the original cause, as, for example, chronic kidney disease (Bright's), heart disease, etc.

Influenza.—This complaint has of late years come into prominence. It is extremely infectious, and particularly prevalent when climatic conditions, such as cold, wet weather, are causing a lowering of vitality in the general health of the public. It is to be found in several forms attacking various organs of the body; perhaps that of the respiratory type is the commonest in children. It begins like a cold, rapidly developing into a mild or severe bronchitis which may be followed by pneumonia. Headaches, pains in the back and legs, and fever are present. Influenza of

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the digestive tract begins as sickness, vomiting, and diarrhoea—a starvation diet with plenty of fluid, and complete rest in bed, will probably effect a cure.

Another form in which the complaint is found, is concerned with the nervous system. Headache is usually the primary symptom, followed by great mental depression. A strange feature of this disease is its rapid onset; a seemingly healthy person may be struck down in two or three hours, and then bed is the only proper place to combat the infection. It is particularly dangerous in children, who should be guarded against infection as much as possible. Good, plain food and warm clothing are two of the greatest defences, because they assist the body in keeping up the desired high level of vitality. One attack is no proof of immunity against a second, so convalescence must be slow and thorough to prevent the occurrence of a relapse.

Typhoid Fever is caused by a bacillus which attacks the intestinal tract. Good nursing and careful dieting, as ordered by the physician, will make all the difference to the child's chance

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of recovery. Very careful disinfection of dishes and utensils, clothing and excreta, is necessary.*

Diphtheria is an extremely serious disease, and the presence of a doctor should be demanded on the slightest suspicion. Infection occurs from the nasal discharges, and the germs attack the throat. A "diphtheritic membrane" forms here, and may pass down into the larynx. The toxins of diphtheria are very liable to attack the heart-muscle; great care must be taken to keep the patient lying flat, avoiding all movement.

Mumps is another of the commoner infectious diseases. The germ attacks the salivary glands, but a serious complication arises when the sexual glands are involved. These may become inflamed, with perhaps ultimate loss of function. Domestic treatment, therefore, consists of complete rest in a warm room, until all the symptoms of the disease are ultimately overcome.

CONVALESCENCE is just as important an item in an illness as the actual combating of

* Every mother should read Dr. Stella Churchill's book in this series, *Nursing in the Home*.

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the disease itself. It is the period of recuperation of the body ; damaged tissues are repaired and strength is regained, and those forces of the body which have been particularly in action, such as red blood-corpuscles and white corpuscles or leucocytes, gradually return to their healthy constitution.

The great thing to remember in any convalescence is that it must be slow and gradual. In dealing with children, difficulty will be found in this respect, for they may become irritable and restless, chafing against sick-room conditions.

Strength should be built up with good nourishing food, preferably plain ; fruit and eggs are two excellent constituents of a convalescent's diet, while milk should not be stinted.

Pleasant reading should be provided, and visitors permitted at intervals ; but excitement of any kind must be rigidly avoided. Sunlight and fresh air are essential. The next step is when the patient is permitted to leave the sick-bed ; gentle exercise, at first indoors and then short walks, may be indulged in ; and so the invalid is led along the road to

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recovery and is enabled to face "germs" with the maximum of healthy vitality. After certain illnesses it sometimes appears as if a child had changed in outlook and behaviour; even complete upheaval of character has been recorded.

This may be due, in fact in most cases it is due, to too short an interval elapsing between the ailment and the return to normal life: in other words, convalescence has been too rapid. Such a child possesses no energy, becomes "slack" and mentally dull; but this is certainly not the fault of the child, who is held back by forces beyond his understanding, forces which are the result of physical ill-health and which are reflected in mental attitude.

Patience and care will work wonders in these conditions: new surroundings and new faces, and a holiday in the country may be required to bring about a perfect restoration of body and mind.

CHAPTER XIII

SICKNESS IN THE NURSERY

AILMENTS most likely to attract attention among growing children can be divided into four main groups—those affecting the nervous system ; those concerned with the digestive tract ; diseases involving the heart and circulation ; and diseases of the respiratory system.

NERVOUS AILMENTS

Chorea.—This is a condition most commonly affecting children between the ages of five and fifteen. It consists of an irregular and involuntary twitching of muscles, often accompanied by a varying amount of change in the mental outlook. Some of the infectious diseases, such as scarlet fever and rheumatic fever, predispose towards chorea : but highly strung and excitable children are always liable

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to it, and some sudden mental shock, such as a fright or a cruel scolding, may rapidly bring on an attack. The strain of education is often blamed as one of the exciting causes.

The great danger underlying this condition is, not the chorea itself, but its complications, most important of which is heart disease. In consequence, all treatment is based upon giving the heart as much rest as possible and rebuilding the bodily and mental strength of the patient. Hygienic measures are usually followed after some time by complete recovery. The child should be kept in bed, and as few visitors as possible allowed into the sick-room. Amusement without excitement is the great factor in dealing with such cases.

Tics.—These conditions are merely varieties of what are termed “habit-spasm”, and, as such, they must not be confused with the much more serious chorea. Tics occur in children about the same period as when they are liable to chorea, and often take the form of sudden, rapid contractions of one or more groups of muscles. The facial muscles are most usually affected, but shrugging of the

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shoulder-muscles or spasms of the brachial muscles are also to be met with. The symptoms are usually transient and pass off in time, though occasionally a habit-spasm may become fixed and persist throughout life.

Convulsions.—These seizures, when found in children, are usually associated with some unstable condition of the central nervous system, which is consequently easily upset by teething or digestive derangement or worms. The commonest cause of convulsions is dietetic. Rickets is often mentioned as a cause, but this is a disease due to an insufficient and incorrect diet. The poison of infectious fevers may be responsible for an attack of convulsions. With regard to treatment, a doctor should be called in at once, so that the cause may be ascertained if possible and dealt with.

A warm bath is an excellent sedative: the head and shoulders should be bathed in cold water while the child is in a bath of about 100° C.

Infantile Paralysis.—This occurs early in life, usually during the second or third year. The first sign may be irritability, and the child appears to have lost the use of one

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limb ; this may or may not be accompanied by pain, and the condition may spread to a second limb. Affected limbs soon become wasted. Many theories have been put forward as to the cause of the disease, but little is known except that infantile paralysis is caused by inflammation of the spinal cord due to some infection of a very subtle kind. Treatment must always be undertaken by a doctor, but a parent's help is usually needed in the later stages when extensive massage and electric treatment have to be applied, perhaps for a year or longer, according to instructions.

Meningitis is the name given to the condition of inflammation of the membranes which cover the brain and spinal cord. "Brain fever" is its popular name.

There are several organisms which bring on this disease, notably the tubercle bacillus. The onset is usually rapid, beginning with headache and vomiting. The condition is a serious one. Complete rest and quietness till the arrival of a doctor is all that can be done.

Night Terrors.—Children of a nervous disposition or neurotic type are very prone to

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this complaint, and it should be treated in such a manner as to improve the general nervous tone. A second and very frequent cause is digestive disturbance ; regular meals and an extremely light supper should soon alleviate such a condition. A third cause of night terrors is adenoid growths in the nose. These require to be dealt with by the doctor.

Sleeplessness is a condition secondary to many more serious diseases ; the only treatment in such cases is to attack the primary trouble, and as this is disposed of, the insomnia will disappear in due course. Insomnia may be found as a complication of heart disease, kidney disease, dyspepsia, and anæmia. Quite apart from this type of sleeplessness, we may find more simple causes that are easy to remedy, for instance a hot, stuffy bedroom, mental fatigue, over-eating, nasal obstruction. In small children, worms keep up a constant irritation, and are often an unsuspected cause of the complaint.

Stammering.—This is an affection of the muscles of speech and respiration, and is usually found in connection with the pronunciation of words beginning with the labial

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and dental letters such as *b*, *f*, *d*, and *t*. Treatment should be taken along the lines of a general re-education. Slow speech, singing lessons, and strict attention to pronunciation, all help towards recovery. Breathing exercises should be insisted upon and the general health closely examined, especially in delicate children or those of a nervous disposition.

DISEASES OF THE DIGESTIVE ORGANS

Indigestion, or "stomach ache", is associated with the irritation of the inner lining of the stomach and difficulty in breaking down the food.

There are two main forms of indigestion, the functional type known as "dyspepsia", and "gastritis", which is associated with a definite organic change.

Dyspepsia is sometimes thought to be evidence of a neurotic temperament and a disturbance of mental as well as physical health. A feeling of discomfort, perhaps pain, occurs sometimes, accompanied by flatulence and "heart-burn". Gastritis is associated with local tenderness over the stomach, per-

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haps with vomiting, and often with a long history of dyspepsia ; but this condition is not so common in children.

A distinction must be made between the above more serious complaints and the well-known transient stomach trouble which occurs when that organ is suddenly called upon to accommodate food excessive in quantity and of unsuitable quality, with the result that a rapid upheaval or vomiting occurs, and the normal state is once more restored.

The causes of indigestion, in addition to the neurosis already mentioned, have been attributed to constant errors of diet, too rich food, and excessive or irregular feeding. Treatment, as in so many other complaints, proceeds along the lines of removing the cause. Regular meals of plain food should be instituted, and eating between meals absolutely forbidden, thus allowing the stomach a period of rest between its working hours. If the food is properly chewed, a great deal of work is done which would otherwise fall upon the stomach. Septic teeth must of course be attended to.

Food Poisoning.—This is caused by eating food contaminated by germs or microbes,

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which bring about a decomposition, often very slight, but nevertheless extremely harmful. Flesh—whether of beast, fish, or fowl—readily undergoes putrefaction, and this article of diet is in most cases the cause of the trouble.

Inflammation of the intestine is produced, which in slight cases is overcome by the body, recovery proceeding normally; severe cases, however, may have a fatal ending. The symptoms are pain, vomiting, thirst, and diarrhœa which rapidly sets in as a result of the intestinal catarrh.

An emetic should be given as soon as possible, e.g., a dessertspoonful of mustard in a tumbler of tepid water. The patient should be kept in bed, with the body and limbs warmly covered; hot-water bottles help to prevent collapse, and a dose of castor oil helps to get rid of the poison.

A stimulant such as brandy may be necessary, while sips of hot water alleviate the pain.

Colic.—Sharp and acute pain, when occurring in the abdomen, is known as Colic.

Intestinal Colic is often due to the food's having reached the intestines, insufficiently digested by the stomach. Diarrhœa will probably follow the pain, and thus the source of

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the trouble is got rid of. A dose of castor oil should be given, but only in the absence of abdominal tenderness.

The patient should be given a hot bath, and put to bed with a poultice over the abdomen, to await the arrival of a doctor ; hot drinks, such as milk or gruel, may be of assistance in dispelling the discomfort.

Jaundice is a condition where the bile-pigment from the liver escapes into the blood-stream and is taken up by many of the cells in the body. It occurs as a complication of infectious fevers and of septicæmia, and is caused by various chemical poisons, due to dietetic errors, setting up inflammation of the bile-ducts. Exposure to cold and damp is a predisposing factor. The chief symptoms are yellowness of the skin and of the "white" of the eyeball, and complete loss of appetite, often accompanied by nausea and vomiting.

Headache and mental depression are commonly present. These symptoms usually come on suddenly and disappear gradually ; a complete cleansing of the alimentary canal is the first step in treatment, followed by rest, warmth, and light diet.

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Diarrhœa.—This has been mentioned already as a complication or natural remedy of intestinal troubles, but it can also be brought on directly by chills, by the presence of intestinal parasites, or by toxins in the blood. Food-poisoning, however, is the chief reason for this complaint, and it should be treated accordingly. Food must be limited, and, at first, only liquids should be given.

If the diarrhœa is due to errors in diet, a dose of castor oil should be given.

Constipation.—This, occurring in later life, is often, though not always, the direct outcome of bad habits acquired in early youth, and, as such, it is the cause of much physical discomfort and general nervous depression. In consequence it is most important to develop regular habits in children.

The causes of constipation come under two main headings; mode of life and dietetic errors. A sedentary life predisposes to the complaint; exercise, therefore, should be regular and plentiful. The diet should be varied. Vegetables and fruit are excellent constituents, while plenty of fluids should be included, though not in the form of hard water.

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DISEASES OF THE HEART AND CIRCULATION

Little can be said about this group of diseases which would be of use in the home, for disease of the heart is an extremely serious matter which must be kept under continual medical supervision.

“*Weak Heart*”.—In children, this is very often the most serious complication of rheumatic fever or scarlet fever, which therefore entail constant care on the part of the parents during convalescence. Damage has been done to the inner lining of the heart, and though healing may have taken place, the normal efficiency of the heart will have become lowered, so that a doctor's opinion should be obtained and his directions rigidly carried out.

The golden rule in such cases is moderation. Exercise should be taken but not of a violent character; idleness must be avoided, and so should over-work. A general interest in people and things must be fostered and stimulated; regular meals and regular hours for work, play, and sleep are a necessity, and the patient must avoid catching cold.

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Diet will probably need attention, and all foods which may tend to cause indigestion should be avoided. Drugs should never be prescribed by the mother. Hot baths and cold baths should not be indulged in, but a tepid bath every day is excellent. Rest of body and tranquillity of mind are essential guiding factors towards recovery.

Chilblains are primarily due to a deficient circulation of the blood-stream in the extremities, namely the fingers and toes. There is inflammation in and under the skin, which, if severe, may lead to ulceration. Chilblains can be prevented by warm clothing (woollen stockings and gloves), and by maintaining the circulation by exercise or locally by rubbing. Bathing in cold water and then drying with a rough towel are excellent defensive proceedings.

When chilblains have made their appearance, they can be painted with iodine; but if they have "broken", they must be bathed in warm water and boracic powder, and covered with some protective dressing.

Warming cold hands in front of a fire is a likely way to bring on this complaint. Cod

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liver oil and malt extract is a good aid to the body in defending it against the attacks of cold.

Nose-bleeding.—This ailment occurs quite frequently in a growing child at or about the age of puberty. It is associated with small ulcerations or inflammatory conditions of the mucous membrane of the nose. On its occurrence the cause should be investigated; in some cases it is due to adenoids.

Profuse bleeding often occurs after a blow. The hæmorrhage will probably cease of its own accord, but some simple remedies may be applied. The arms should be raised above the head and cold wet towels placed at the nape of the neck. Ice can be applied to the nose, and, if necessary, the nostrils may be plugged with cotton wool.

DISEASES OF THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

There are four chief conditions affecting the lungs, bronchitis, pneumonia, pleurisy and consumption.

Bronchitis.—This is an inflammatory condition of the bronchial tubes to which children are particularly susceptible. Cold and damp

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climatic conditions are very favourable to its onset. It is most desirable that a quick recovery should be brought about ; otherwise a chronic condition may set in entailing a constant cough and " wheezing ". Bronchitis may also be caused by a common cold, the catarrhal inflammation spreading down the trachea into the lungs.

Discretion in the matter of clothes would prevent many cases. Children in cold weather need to be warmly clad when at rest, and not overclothed when performing violent exercise. The main symptoms are cough, a general feeling of illness, and a rise in temperature. A hot bath, hot drinks, and a hot poultice over the chest will usually bring relief, while some medicine should be prescribed for the cough, if present.

For chronic cases, a change to a mild sunny climate is far more effective than any medicinal remedies.

Pneumonia is a disease which comes on suddenly, often following a slight chill. No matter how mild, it is a serious condition, but careful nursing at the onset may prevent a bad attack. It is caused by a microbe, the

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pneumococcus, and is found in two main types—lobar pneumonia, where one or more lobes of the lung are infected, and broncho-pneumonia, in which the inflammation is in patches throughout the lung and the attack lasts for a longer time.

In the case of lobar pneumonia the temperature rises and remains up for seven or eight days, the pulse becomes rapid and the respiration laboured, and there is coughing with rusty coloured expectoration. Then follows a sudden fall to normal or subnormal, probably accompanied by profuse sweating; this period is known as the "crisis", and it is at this time that there is present a danger of heart failure.

From now onwards a general improvement should be shown, with a recovery in the rates of pulse and respiration. Convalescence must be slow and gradual, warmth and fresh air and nourishing diet being essential.

Sufficient stress is never laid upon the fact that pneumonia is infectious; due precautions must be taken in this, as in all other infectious diseases.

Pleurisy is caused by inflammation of

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the membrane covering the lungs ; constant friction, which is the source of the pain, is caused when the chest moves in breathing. The condition may complicate measles or scarlet fever or pneumonia, or a sudden chill may suddenly produce an attack. Sharp stabbing pains in the side or front of the chest are complained of, and these can be relieved by application of a mustard plaster or, in the later stages, by painting with iodine, thus providing a counter-irritant. Feverish symptoms will probably be present ; so the diet should be of the lightest, and no excess of fluids should be given.

Pleurisy is often a warning that a child may have a tendency to consumption or tuberculosis of the lungs ; two or more distinct attacks of this complaint probably indicate that tuberculosis is already established in some mild form. Carefulness is a vital necessity to the future health, entailing the avoidance of exposure to any extremes of heat and cold, and to infectious diseases.

Consumption.—It has been thought in the past that consumption was chiefly a hereditary disease, but recent investigations have

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proved beyond doubt that it is purely infectious. The germs are often picked up in early life, for they are found in dust floating freely in the air ; thus they are inhaled, and may lie dormant in the body until some favourable opportunity appears for them to begin an active life.

There are two main forms of this disease, the acute or galloping consumption, and the chronic type which may persist indefinitely, gradually bringing about a state of weakness and an eventual " fading away " of the stricken individual. Characteristic signs of the presence of the chronic stages are a persistent cough and continual loss of weight, accompanied by weakness and night sweats, while spitting of blood is a typical symptom accompanied by varying amounts of sputum. Pain in the chest may or may not be present ; if there is pain, it is often an indication that pleurisy is a complication.

Acute consumption may have a very sudden onset, often in the guise of an attack of bronchitis ; a " swinging " temperature may be noticed, perhaps normal in the morning and raised towards night ; there is considerable

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cough, and night sweats are almost invariably present. There is general weakness and loss of weight.

Fresh air is by far the best "medicine"; the patient should be placed in a sheltered spot outdoors, and, weather permitting, he should also sleep outside. If this is impossible, the windows of the sick room must be kept wide open. Worry and over-strain should be avoided, and mental needs should be attended to with all possible consideration.

The nose and throat are other seats of infection from which arise many secondary complications.

Sore Throat.—There are many and varied types of this complaint, the simplest being of quite a common occurrence associated with a "cold". It consists of a mild catarrh or inflammation of the mucous membrane of the soft palate, causing pain on swallowing and a feeling of general discomfort at the back of the mouth. Should it become more severe, ulceration sets in with a rise in temperature. Warmth is the best method of dealing with the case, and a gargle should certainly be prescribed; but when a cure has been achieved, it is a

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great mistake to cover up the affected part. The right course to adopt is to strengthen the throat and save it from further attacks ; attention to the general health is the best way to accomplish this.

Tonsillitis.—More severe attacks have a tendency to produce an acute inflammation and hypertrophy of the tonsils. These organs, lying in the back of the throat, become infected, enlarged, and ulcerated, displaying small, yellowish-white patches exuding pus. Yet a further development is the formation of an abscess, known as quinsy ; if this occurs, it will require medical attention, and probably the use of the lancet.

In all cases of sore throats, gargles are the main treatment, but tonsillitis also requires that the patient be confined to bed and given an aperient and a light nourishing diet. Should repeated attacks set in, it is best to consult a doctor as to the advisability of the removal of the tonsils. Tonsillitis is frequently associated with adenoids.

Adenoids are growths arising in the back of the nose which form masses of a variable size, partially obstructing the air passages,

and usually accompanied by a persistent chronic catarrh. The only effective treatment is complete removal. Should this not be done, all types of disordered conditions of the nose and throat may supervene. A child's life can be made a misery by a perpetual "running" nose and dry, painful throat. The development of the face is arrested and distorted ; the mouth sags open, and the lower jaw may stop growing. Mouth breathing, perforce, becomes a habit ; and, especially in sleep, breathing is loud, and snoring and night terrors are often experienced. A vacant expression—typical of the adenoid condition—appears on the face ; this is merely reflecting an impairment of the mental faculties, the development of which is being retarded because of lack of treatment.

In conclusion, any type of sore throat should be treated with the utmost respect ; many a mild case of diphtheria has passed unsuspected, and thus infection has travelled to others.

Hay Fever is catarrh of the mucous membrane of the nose. It occurs in this country in the summer and autumn months, and investigations have shown that it is due to

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irritation caused by the pollen of flowers and grasses. A particularly sensitive lining to the nose is often associated with a neurotic temperament. The patient experiences an acute running discharge from the nose and frequently from the eyes also, whilst there may be a feeling of general depression.

Carbolic ointment, or menthol and eucalyptus ointment, should be applied. Attention should be given to the general health. Cauterizing may effect a permanent cure ; modern vaccine therapy gives excellent results in some cases.

Thrush is a common ailment among young children due to a mould which produces white inflammatory patches on the inside of the lips, cheeks, and gums. A chlorate of potash mouth-wash must be used, and a reorganization of diet and improved hygienic conditions will soon effect a cure. The complaint is due to lack of cleanliness and poor diet ; it is contagious because due to a fungus.

SKIN CONDITIONS

Many skin diseases are contagious, that is they are due to microbic infection. Attention to soap and water, and regular habits as re-

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gards the changing of clothes, will, in all probability, effectually diminish the occurrence of these infections. Care must be taken to cover the affected part, and to burn all old dressings.

Eczema first appears as a simple redness of the skin, rapidly developing into small blisters and finally drying into scaly patches. It can be caused by an irritant, and usually occurs near joints, for example behind the knees or at the elbows. The face is often affected, especially round the lips and nostrils and behind the ears. Soap and water should never be used when the condition has become apparent ; some soothing ointment must be applied after cleansing with olive oil.

Herpes, or " shingles ", also begins as a redness of the skin, followed by the appearance of small blisters ; the lips and the sides of the chest are common sites.

The complaint is an indication of poor general health, and attention should be paid to nourishing foods. An ointment or powder containing equal parts of zinc, starch, and boracic acid, is one of the best local applications.

Scabies, or " Itch ", is produced by a para-

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site known as the " Itch mite ", which burrows into the skin and often locates itself between the fingers. Hot baths, with a liberal application of soap and the scrubbing brush, and the use of sulphur ointment at night, should be effective. The clothes must be ironed to disinfect them.

Urticaria, or " Nettle Rash ", is indicative, either of excessive food or of poor food. The onset of the rash is sudden, and it passes off quite quickly ; it has the same appearance as that caused by stinging nettles.

A purgative and simple, nourishing diet will prevent a repetition. If painful itching is present, a tepid bath, in which has been placed a little creolin, will bring relief.

Acne is a common skin disease which appears about the age of puberty. Small pimples, which later develop into pustules, appear on the face and neck.

Thorough washing with soap and water, regular exercise, and simple meals, all of which are necessary to well-being at this age, will help to tide over this period, and the acne in due course will subside.

Boils are yet another sign that the general

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health is getting "below par". They are caused by a germ, the *Staphylococcus*, which multiplies in the tissues under the skin and forms a small abscess. If boils become painful and show no tendency to subside, a physician should be consulted.

Too much stress cannot be laid upon the fact that the great majority of ailments might be avoided if the maintenance of good health were given more consideration. Great attention is always paid after the disease has run its course ; invalid foods and tonics are then provided lavishly. Why not exercise a little care beforehand and prevent illness in the nursery ? It is so much easier and so much less expensive than the cure.

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